THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AND BLACK MEN

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ABSTRACT

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The criminal justice system is supposed to represent an impartial and just judicial system which is devoid of skewed variables such as race, sex, and age. However, there is an abundance of empirical studies which challenge the impartiality of the System. This project focuses on black men and how the criminal justice system affects the social, political, and economic realities of black enclaves.

This project employs a mixed method research approach by utilizing government data and think tank research information for empirical quantitative and qualitative data. This information was used in concert with historical facts on race and race relations. The dynamics and changes of this relation through the movement of history were illuminated and help understand the construct of meaning for black men.

How the construct of meaning for black men formed, morphed, and reshaped through history to the contemporary era has many variables. However, the criminal justice system revealed elasticity in history and has always been a factor in race relations. Focus groups, open dialogue, and the sharing of personal experiences were critical in this project. This allowed understanding of contemporary meaning for black men in order to mediate the collapse of identity, and to nurture life change, notably from prisons to productiveness.

I want to dedicate this body of work to my wife Sarah and children Kellie, Keyana, and Kyla who has always been there to support me every day of the week. I must also recognize my mother Joyce Campbell who has always been there for me. They have always given me a gentle push to continue the work which I started until completion. I am indebted to their love.

In Memory of

Curtis J. Josephs

A lifelong friend and colleague that began this project as a member of
the site team but passed away before its completion. He is truly missed.

Acknowledgments

First I want to give honor to God who has sustained me through so many challenges. Without my faith in God and being grounded in Christ this work would have not been possible. I want to acknowledge everyone that has poured into me over the years, including my co-laborers in the faith. They were always a source of inspiration. I want to acknowledge every staff member of New York Theological Seminary that played a role in preparing me for this body of work. I also want to thank everyone from the Nida Institute of Biblical Scholarship for their insight. I want to specially thank my project advisor Dr. Keith Russell and Dr. Wanda Lundy for their continued encouragement in completing this project.

I want to thank the faithful saints of United Community Baptist Church for their commitment to the church. Also, pastors Revs Drs. Floyd and Elaine Flake who has always been there to support me, they are a blessing to my entire family. Lastly, I want to acknowledge my site team, without them this project would not have been done. Raymond Campbell, Daryl Greene, Melvin Foy, Barry Thomas and Thomas Keller have been unbelievably supportive. I am fortunate enough to have them as not also my collaborators in this project, but they are also lifelong and close friends.

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CHAPTER 1
THE SETTING

The setting for this demonstration project is the United Community Baptist Church. The address is 545 Utica Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11203. This location is in Kings County. I serve as the Senior Pastor of this Baptist church. The church is located in the East Flatbush section of Brooklyn, which has a large Caribbean population. This church is also a part of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Utica Avenue in Brooklyn is an avenue of commerce and housing. This roadway is lined with storefront businesses beneath housing units, banks, restaurants, hotels, bars, churches, government service centers, and healthcare facilities. Because of the commerce and commuter traffic on this roadway, the church is easily accessible by public transportation. The majority of the parishioners live either within walking distance or a short commute away from the church.

Schism and Reconciliation

The origins of United Community Baptist Church (UCBC) began in 2001. The physical street location where UCBC is located was occupied by and known as Atonement Baptist Church. In 1995, Atonement Baptist Church experienced a schism that literally divided the church into two factions. Because of disagreements within the church body, a group of members of this church left to form a new church, and named it New Deliverance Baptist Church. These two churches operated independently and apart from one another until the process of reconciliation began in January of 2001.

Because these church bodies were comprised of people of color, leadership from the African American Church Planting Division of the Southern Baptist Convention of New York, as well as the New York Metropolitan Baptist Association, which is an operating arm of the Southern Baptist Convention in New York City, met with officers of both churches to begin a discussion of reunification possibilities. This meeting as well as future meetings to pursue reconciliation was led by Rev. Samuel G. Simpson and Rev. Dr. Dennis Campbell.

Through meeting, planning, preparation, and prayer, progress was made over the next several months and the prospect of reconciliation began to turn into a reality. On September 29, 2001, it was agreed to by both churches to unite as one church body to be named United Community Baptist Church. Rev. Dr. Dennis Campbell agreed to serve as pastor of UCBC. He served as senior pastor until his retirement in April of 2013. Upon his retirement and in the same month, I assumed the position and began serving as senior pastor after being chosen by and agreeing with the church pastoral search committee and the church membership.

A Denominational Critique

I assumed the role of pastor with some concerns based on my personal understanding of some beliefs and the historical position and formation of the Southern Baptist Convention. The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) is the largest Baptist organization in the United States of America. The SBC is also a strong advocate of missionary work. The SBC had its foundation with early proponents of the Baptist denomination in the early 1600s through the mid-1800s with important notables such as John Smyth, Johnathan Edwards and Shubael Stearns.

Tensions developed in the early Baptist church over the issue of slavery and missionary work. In 1814, the Triennial Convention functioned as the missionary arm of the early Baptist church, and this Convention was opposed to the slave trade. The issue of slavery was a major contributor of tension within the early Baptist church. This tension commenced with the Emancipation Proclamation, which was signed by Abraham Lincoln and put into effect on January 1, 1863, which began the process of freeing all slaves.

The Southern Baptist Convention was formed in 1845 because of pro and anti-slavery convictions, mostly between the churches of the North and the South. Southern Baptist pastors strongly defended slavery and decided to secede from the Northern Baptist churches. Pastors such as Thornton Stringfellow from the state of Virginia justified slavery by using the New Testament Gospel as ammunition for his justification.[1]

Since the 1990s, the Southern Baptist Convention took intentional measures to correct its racist beginnings. At the 1995 annual meeting of the SBC, the Convention took a major step and attempted to bring attention to racial reconciliation and passed a resolution at the 150th year anniversary of the Convention. The resolution stated,

> Whereas, since its founding in 1845, the Southern Baptist Convention has been an effective instrument of God in missions, evangelism, and social ministry; and the Scriptures teach that Eve is the mother of all living (Genesis 3:20), and that God shows no partiality, but in every nation whoever fears him and works righteousness is accepted by him (Acts 10:34-35), and that God has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on the face of the earth (Acts 17:26); and our relationship to African-Americans has been hindered from the beginning by the role that slavery played in the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention; and many of our Southern Baptist forbears defended the right to own slaves, and either participated in, supported, or acquiesced in the particularly inhumane nature of American Slavery; and in later years Southern Baptists failed, in many cases, to support, and in some cases opposed, legitimate

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[1] Emma Green, "Sin of Racism," *The Atlantic*, April 7, 2015.

initiatives to secure the civil rights of African-Americans; and racism has led to discrimination, oppression, injustice, and violence, both in the Civil War and throughout the history of our nation; and racism has divided the body of Christ and Southern Baptist in particular, and separated us from our African-American brothers and sisters; and many of our congregations have intentionally and/or unintentionally excluded African-Americans from worship, membership, and leadership; and racism profoundly distorts our understanding of Christian morality, leading some Southern Baptists to believe that racial prejudice and discrimination are compatible with the Gospel; and Jesus performed the ministry of reconciliation to restore sinners to a right relationship with the Heavenly Father, and to establish right relations among all human beings, especially within the family of faith. Therefore, be it resolved, that we, the messengers to the sesquicentennial meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, assembled in Atlanta, Georgia, June 20-21, 1995, unwaveringly denounce racism, in all its forms, as a deplorable sin; and be it further resolved, that we affirm the Bibles teaching that every human life is sacred, and is of equal and immeasurable worth, made in Gods image, regardless of race or ethnicity (Genesis 1:27), and that, with respect to salvation through Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for (we) are all one in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:28); and that we lament and repudiate historic acts of evil such as slavery from which we continue to reap a bitter harvest, and we recognize that the racism which yet plagues our culture today is inextricably tied to the past; and that we apologize to all African –Americans for condoning and /or perpetuating individual and systematic racism in our lifetime; and we genuinely repent of racism for which we have been guilty, whether consciously (Psalm 19:13) or unconsciously (Leviticus 4:27); and that we ask forgiveness from our African-American brothers and sisters, acknowledging that our own healing is at stake; and that we hereby commit ourselves to eradicate racism in all its forms from Southern Baptists life and ministry; and that we commit ourselves to be doers of the Word (James 1:22) by pursuing racial reconciliation in all our relationships, especially with our brothers and sisters in Christ (1 John 2:6), to the end that our light would so shine before others, that they may see (our) good works and glorify (our) Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16);and be it finally resolved, that we pledge our commitment to the Great Commission task to making disciples of all people (Matthew 28:19), confessing that in the church God is calling together one people form every tribe and nation (Revelation 5:9), and proclaiming that the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is the only certain and sufficient ground upon which redeemed persons will stand tougher in restored family union as joint-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:17).[2]

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[2] Southern Baptist Convention, "Resolution on Racial Reconciliation on the 150th Anniversary of

This edict by the SBC was essentially an apology for the historical positon on slavery and racial disparagement within the Convention. This proclamation was a congenial acknowledgment of the Convention being formed on the wrong side of the ethos of Christian morality. However, the mere issuance of a resolution is unable to disentangle 150 years of history which was rooted and grown in racial marginalization.

From the resolution towards racial reconciliation in the 1995 annual meeting, the SBC Inter-Agency Council (IAC) organized a task force to further their reconciliation agenda. In 1996, the Racial Reconciliation Task Force (RRTF) was organized and charged, "To work towards strategy and implementation of full racial and ethnic reconciliation."[3]

This task force was also charged with seeking ways to have diversity in representation on the SBC board of trustees, staff membership, faculties, and in all bodies that comprise of the SBC. Those that occupied positions of notoriety were to be appointed based upon qualifications, while embracing ethnic diversity. To further the reconciliation narrative, the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary embraced the idea of reconciliation and contemplated ways to eradicate racism from Southern Baptist life and ministry.[4]

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the Southern Baptist Convention," Resolution Seven, *1995 Southern Baptist Convention Annual Report* (Nashville, TN: Baptist Press, 1995), 80-81.

[3] Southern Baptist Convention Journal, "SBC Inter-Agency Council Names Racial Reconciliation Task Force" *SBC Life: Journal of the Southern Baptist Convention* (May 1996), www.sbclife.net/ Articles/1996/05/sla7.

[4] Ibid.

To further the agenda of racial inclusion, a resolution was passed during the 2008 annual meeting of the SBC to celebrate the growth of ethnic diversity in the SBC. The resolution stated,

> Whereas, according to LifeWay Christian Resources, there are several thousand ethnic congregations within the Southern Baptist Convention; and there is among our ethnic brothers and sisters strong leadership, pulpit ability, administrative capability, and denominational, theological, and scriptural fidelity consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message; and many ethnic congregations give sacrificially to support missions and evangelism through the Corporative Program; now, therefore, be it resolved, that the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, June 10-11, 2008, express our gratitude to God for His reconciling grace; and be it further resolved, that we encourage all entities of the Southern Baptist Convention to strive toward a balanced representation of our ethnic diversity; and be it finally resolved, that we encourage our president and all committees to work with state conventions and local associations to identify ethnic leadership from cooperating Southern Baptist churches to serve on boards, committees, and programs of the Southern Baptist Convention.[5]

At this same convention, the Black Southern Baptist Denominational Servants Network (BSBDSN) of the SBC issued a report on the state of ethnic inclusion within the SBC since the organization of the RRTF. Regarding progress in ethnic diversity, the report stated, "About 250 African Americans were employed in the Southern Baptist Convention's association, state/regional conventions and national entities – up from about 90 in 1996."[6] The report showed a substantial increase of African American employees; however, it did not give more data pertaining to the ethnicity of all SBC employees, as well as data on the levels of authority within the organization with regard to ethnicities.

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[5] Southern Baptist Convention, "On Celebrating the Growing Ethnic Diversity of the Southern Baptist Convention," Resolution Number Two, *Southern Baptist Convention Annual Report*, http://www.sbc.net/resolutions/1185 (accessed January 29, 2017).

[6] Southern Baptist Convention, "Black Servants Report Growth," *Baptist Press*, June 16, 2008, http://www.bpnews.net/28299/black-servants-report-growth (accessed January 29, 2017).

At the 2011 annual meeting, the Executive Committee issued a report of their review of ethnicity within the SBC, and the ethnicities of church leadership participation within the SBC. The Report had five focal points that were the overarching points which punctuated the report. First, was to review past Convention actions and resolutions relative to the report's subject matter. Second, was to develop a baseline regarding involvement and participation of ethnic congregations and leaders in the SBC. Third, was to identify gaps in participation and visible involvement of ethnic churches and leaders in the SBC. Fourth, was to consider appropriate action steps to facilitate any proposed changes to the existing Convention processes. And fifth, to establish a timeline to review and assess the status or progress of any suggested recommendations.[7]

There were nineteen objectives within the five main focal points that the Executive Committee's study illuminated. Noted are: a review of resolutions adapted by the SBC on the ethnic church and the ethnic church leadership in the SBC; an analysis of the ethnic identities of all program personalities on the platform at the SBC annual meetings for the past five years; a review of the election of officers of the SBC for the past decade; a descriptive survey of ethnic identity of professional staff at the entities of the SBC, including the Executive Committee; a descriptive survey of the ethnic identity of all field personnel under appointment by the two mission boards of the SBC; a descriptive survey of the ethnic identity of seminary faculty at the six Southern Baptist

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[7] Southern Baptist Convention, "A Review of Ethnic Church and Ethnic Church Leader Participation in SBC Life," *Southern Baptist Convention Annual Report* (Nashville, TN: Baptist Press, 2011), 138.

Convention seminaries; and a review of a printed collection of resources produced by the Black Southern Baptist Denominational Servants Network.[8]

The findings of the Committee were that the SBC desired to see an increase in ethnic participation. Churches affiliated with the Convention had never been tasked with the ethnic composition of their membership, making it impossible to know the ethnic percentages of the local churches. However, anecdotal testimony from various ethnicities indicated that ethnic church leaders involved in visible elected roles within the SBC did not represent the percentage growth of ethnic congregations. The Committee also stated that there was a failure to develop a broad-based strategy to keep ethnic representation before Convention leaders in the nomination and hiring process.[9]

It is my opinion that the leadership of the SBC should have been aware of the issue of ethnic diversity in leadership roles within the SBC. Further, this recognition was placated by the passing of resolutions and the creation of the RRTF. However, if the body of the RRTF does not represent the ethnic diversities of the Convention, and if the RRTF is not given the authority to see implementations of its findings, then instead of meaningful change towards diversity, there will be no change.

The organization of the RRTF was a noble step towards restorative justice within the historical context of the SBC. However, true change most often occurs when those that are in positions of authority are given not only a platform to speak of change, but when they also have the backing of middle and lower lines of the hierarchical structure of an organization to help implement and sustain the changes that are proposed. I believe

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[8] Ibid., 138-139.

[9] Ibid., 140.

that this assessment was revealed when the RRTF recommended a name change of the organization to the SBC leadership.

The name, "Southern Baptist Convention" has a connotation to many individuals of color and is a cue to slavery in the south. The name is also associated with the imagery of limitations to people of color that evokes history and the southern states. The name, "Southern Baptist" limits the Convention to a geographical region of the country in spite of the SBC being the largest Protestant denomination in the United States.

At the 2012 annual meeting of the SBC, the Convention recognized the perception of the SBC name, and attempted to address this public perception of its name, particularly by people of color that are affiliated with the SBC. In a 2011 national survey, over one-third of the people surveyed had unfavorable opinions of the SBC.[10] In the age group of 18-29, the unfavorable opinion was 26%.[11] Within this same age group, 36% viewed the name, "Baptist" as unfavorable.[12] These were particularly alarming statistics because this age group projects the future of the Protestant church. Overall, the national average of 62% of surveyed adults had unfavorable opinions when they saw the name, "Southern Baptist."[13]

The 19 member RRTF, chaired by a male Caucasian, born in 1930, brought the name change recommendations of the task force to the spring 2010 Executive Committee meeting of the SBC. A number of the RRTF recommended that the organization legally

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[10] LifeWay Christian Resources, *Perceptions of Faith Groups* (Nashville, TN: Lifeway Research, December 2011), 9, http://lifewayresearch.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/LifeWay_Research_Perceptions_of_Faith_Groups.pdf.

[11] Ibid., 17.

[12] Ibid, 30.

[13] Ibid, 33.

change its name from the "Southern Baptist Convention," to "Great Commission Baptists."[14] The chairman of the RRTF opposed this recommendation by citing the financial cost and the energy involved with the change. He stated the change would create further issues. He also claimed that the name, "Southern Baptist Convention" is a "strong" name that gives the Convention identity theologically, morally, and ethically.[15]

With the recommendation of then SBC president Bryant Wright, the Executive Committee agreed that all SBC entities would have the option of identifying themselves as "Great Commission Baptists" instead of, or in addition to, "Southern Baptists." However, the legal name of the organization would remain "Southern Baptist Convention."[16] This recommendation went on to be adapted at the 2012 annual meeting of the SBC. Although this change was far from radical, it was a change.

At the 2012 annual meeting of the SBC, the Convention went on to acknowledge the contributions of Blacks in the history of the Baptist Church in America. A resolution was issued stating,

> Whereas, African Americans have played an important role in Baptist history in the United States, it was common for white and black Baptists to worship together before the Civil War, and historiography has not always reflected the contribution of African American Baptists; now, therefore it be resolved that the messengers of the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 19-20, 2012, acknowledge and express their appreciation for the contributions of African Americans to

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[14] David Roach, "Wright: Keep Legal Name; Add Informal Descriptor 'Great Commission Baptists'," *Southern Baptist Convention Journal* (March 2012), http://www.sbclife.net/Articles/2012/03/sla1.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid, 2.

the faithful Baptist witness in the United States; and be it finally resolved.[17]

At this same annual meeting, the SBU elected Fred Luter as its first black President in the history of the Convention. He was the fifty-ninth president of the SBC and served as president until 2014. At the 2015 SBC annual meeting, the Executive Committee (EC) of the SBC produced a diversity report to validate the Radical Reconciliation Resolution (RRR) that was adapted in 1995.[18]

The report stated that since the adaptation of the RRR, "of the 249 individuals that were nominated and elected to serve on the EC since 1996, no more than eight were from non-Anglo racial or ethnic groups."[19] In 2016, the SBC elected its sixty-first president, who is white. Further, the elections from this 2016 annual meeting produced seventy-nine members to its Executive Committee, of which seventy-eight are white.[20]

Making resolutions, organizing task forces, and holding meetings with plans of change and reconciliation are ineffective unless meaningful results are manifested and implanted which are directly related to the change which was intended. The historical divide along race and ethnicity is deeply rooted in the SBC. The willingness to have

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[17] Southern Baptist Convention, "On African American Contributions to American Baptist History," Resolution Number Nine, *Southern Baptist Convention Annual Report* (Nashville, TN: Baptist Press, 2012), http://www.sbc.net/resolutions/1227/on-african-american-contributions-to-american-baptist-history (accessed January 1, 2017).

[18] Southern Baptist Convention, "EC Affirms Racial Diversity Report," *Baptist Press* June16, 2015, http://bpnews.net/44942/ec-affirms-racial-diversity-report (accessed January 1, 2017).

[19] Todd Benkert, "A Review of the Southern Baptist Convention's Progress on Racial Reconciliation, 1995–2015 (Full Text) #SBC15," http://sbcvoices.com/a-review-of-the-southern-baptist-conventions-progress-on-racial-reconciliation-1995-2015-full-text-sbc15/#_ftnref44 (accessed January 1, 2017).

[20] Southern Baptist Convention, "Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention," *2016 Southern Baptist Convention Annual Report* (Nashville, TN: 2016), 1-9.

systematic change regarding racial diversity was a concern of mine with assuming the

responsibility of pastor of UCBC.

Another of my concerns is the exclusion of women in ordained ministry.

Regarding women pastors, SBC doctrine states, "Southern Baptists have long valued the

priceless contribution of women as they have ministered to advance God's Kingdom. The

Baptist Faith and Message (BF&M) affirms the vital role of women serving in the

church. Yet it recognizes the biblical restriction concerning the office of pastor, saying:

"While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is

limited to men as qualified by Scripture." This decree that restricts the office of pastor to

men does not negate the essential equality of men and women before God, but rather

focuses on the assignment of roles. The Southern Baptist Convention also passed a

resolution in the early 1980s recognizing that "offices requiring ordination are restricted

to men."[21] My experience in ministry is that there are plenty of women who are qualified

and capable to serve in ordained ministry, including pastoring. I believe that this

exclusion based on sex is a subject that the SBC must confront in the future.

Pastorate Transition

My personal experience in transitioning to the pastorate office at United

Community Baptist Church (UCBC) has not been a simple one. After being invited by

the church to fill out the requested paperwork for the position of senior pastor, I was one

of three individuals that were being considered to pastor the church. Along with me, one

was a pastor from Kingston, Jamaica; and the other, a lay leader that was a member of

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[21] Southern Baptist Convention, "The 2001 Baptist Faith and Message, Article VI: The Church," http://www.sbc.net/bfm2000/bfm2000.asp (accessed January 1, 2017).

UCBC. This lay leader was a politician and banker from Grenada who was also the former Consul General of Grenada in New York.

The pastor search committee ultimately selected me as their leading candidate to become the pastor of UCBC. Second, was the pastor from Jamaica, and third was the lay leader in the church. This church had no associate or licensed ministers. Therefore, all ministerial obligations were incumbent upon the pastor to oversee, with the aid of lay leaders. I began to pastor the church in April of 2013, and an Installation Service was held on August 11, 2013. By the end of that month of August, dissension erupted in the congregation.

It came to my attention after the fact that the lay leader and former politician that was a member of the church, who was also a finalist for the pastorate position of UCBC, was disgruntled at not being selected to be the pastor of the church. Over the years of his being a member of the church, he developed relationships with several key members, and a number of other members felt obligated to him because of favors he had done on their behalf. This became a serious situation that compromised the stability of the church.

Meetings were being held at homes of some members, and these meetings were led by this lay leader for the purpose of having him replace me as the pastor of the church. This was to be done by protestation and charge that the pastorate search committee process was corrupt; therefore, the outcome of recommendations presented to the church was invalid. Factions formed within the church body in which some were opposed to idea of the lay leader replacing me as pastor, and a group that was in support of this lay leader to be the pastor.

I noticed the change in the countenance and persona within the membership and began to inquire about the cause of this shift. At this point, I was not fully informed of what was transpiring in the church, partly because some believed that I would simply leave the church because this controversy began so quickly after I became the pastor of the church. The tension within the congregation became obvious and concerning.

This lay leader managed to create an ambiance of doubt within the church body regarding the pastorate selection process and the validity of my being the pastor. With the help of others in the church, he managed to hand-deliver invitations to members of the church to a formal celebration at a large banquet hall. This celebration was supposed to be for his accomplishment in completing a terminal degree from an unspecified learning institution. He also invited members from other congregations which were in fellowship with UCBC. Those that were invited to the celebration were invited free of cost.

I was later informed that at the celebration favorable speeches were given about this lay leader. When the lay leader addressed the attendees, he proceeded to appeal his case challenging the pastorate election process and the decision of the pastor search committee. He also claimed that processes regarding financial management of the church were unscrupulous, and his background as a banker would reveal malefactors, which is one of the reasons why he was not selected by the search committee.

After this banquet, the factions within the church became deeply divided. Further, seeds of doubt and confusion were planted with fellowship churches of UCBC. This led to a schism within the church that had the propensity to not just make the church ineffective, but to ultimately cause the church to collapse. It was not until after the celebration banquet that some officers of the church eventually informed me of

everything that transpired regarding this lay leader since the decision of the pastorate search committee, and the actions which he took because of his disagreement with the search committees' decision.

At his point, I was beginning my fifth month as the pastor of UCBC. Once I was fully informed of the facts of what was transpiring, I brought up charges against the lay leader on his conduct in and towards the church in accordance to the church bylaws, and moved to have his membership to the church revoked. It was my opinion, that in light of his conduct, his presence would be a perpetual distraction in and to the church body, and it would also be counterproductive to the progress of ministry. His church membership was revoked.

The response to the revocation of this former member and lay leader's membership roused the congregation. Many parishioners were conflicted, because over the years they developed a personal relationship with him. After the revocation of his membership, the focus of the former member's condemnation shifted from the pastorate search committee and their decision to me as the pastor for having his membership to the church revoked.

This former member whom I shall refer to as "AM" began to host weekly meetings and worship services in the Marriott Hotel located in the downtown area of Brooklyn, and members of UCBC who developed a relationship with him attended. Within a few weeks, AM rented out a reception hall that was approximately four blocks away from UCBC and began to have weekly Sunday services there. When this transpired, the majority of the membership either left UCBC or visited the hall which AM began to hold weekly worship services.

It is my belief that this was an attempt to cause irreparable harm to UCBC, possibly to cause such financial stress that UCBC would reconsider their decision of choosing me as their pastor. To portray an image of financial stability, AM stated that he would pastor UCBC without any form of monetary compensation. When I became the pastor of UCBC, there were approximately 110 members of the church; by the time AM began to hold worship services at the hall, the membership dwindled to approximately 30. It is my estimation that approximately 60 members left UCBC to join AM in worship, and approximately 20 members left UCBC and went to another house of worship, or ceased attending any church services because of the controversy within the church. The latter was and is the greater concern which I have.

The next few months into 2014 were challenging, but the church was able to meet all of its financial obligations. Through prayer, preparation, preaching, and teaching, new parishioners joined UCBC in membership and the church began to grow. In February of 2014, a few of the members that left to join AM began to come back. It was explained to me that many that left were embarrassed to return to the church because of how they left. I reassured them that they would not be turned away from the church. By the month of March, over half of the members that left to worship with AM returned to UCBC.

It was clear that whatever was transpiring at the hall where AM was having worship services was experiencing challenges. One returning member explained that as attendance decreased in worship at the hall with AM, AM began to go to the homes of those that worshiped with him and firmly requested tithes from them. This was disturbing to some that worshiped with him, which contributed to their no longer worshipping with

him. By the month of April, AM stopped having worship services at the hall, presumably because of financial reasons, and the lack of membership support.

What I experienced in my first year in the transition to the pastorate office of UCBC was completely unexpected and certainly unwelcomed. This experience was immensely draining of time and energy. The compromised congregation continues to be in recovery. The damage to the wholeness of the church body was traumatic, but not permanently debilitating. I have come to realize that the time that is needed to recover from this unfortunate series of events far exceeds the time that it took to cause the unrest.

Concerns about the denomination's commitment to racial inclusion, and its positon on certain aspects of ministry, coupled with my turbulent beginnings of pastoring at UCBC, made my ministry extremely challenging. Nevertheless, I believe that God has placed me in this church body for a reason. My call to serve in ministry is certain, and I have every intention to continue to serve in that call. I believe that perseverance is predicated on faithfulness, prayer, and preparation.

In spite of these challenges, the autonomous leverage of the Baptist church enables great possibilities of ministry and service. Therefore, I will continue to do whatever I can to serve the community in which UCBC is located. The physical location of the church building has not changed in the decades since it became a house of worship, but changes happened within the church, and changes also happened in the community.

Community District 17

In exploring the location and setting, I believe that it is important to explore the economic zeitgeist of the community. In doing so, here is some recent published data to aid in the understanding the state of the community. Based on July 1, 2015 figures, there

are approximately 19,795,791 people in the state of New York, and 8,550,405 people in

New York City,[22] of which 2,636,7353 reside in Kings County.[23]

Population

The church is located in Community District #17. The estimated population in

this district based on 2010 data is 155,252, which is a decrease from 165, 758 in the year

2000.[24] A U.S. Census 2010-2012 Survey of this district population revealed, 126,376

Blacks, which is a decrease from 127,900 in 2010; 3,235 Whites, which is also a decrease

from 3,909 in 2010, and 8,915 Hispanics or Latino, which is an increase from 8,754 in

2010. The District is comprised of approximately 45% females and 55% males.

Approximately 43% of the District population is between 20 and 54 years of age.[25]

These are the three major ethnic groups within this district. In District #17, there

were an estimated 21,301 individuals who had no health insurance, down from 32,685 in

2010, and 14.4% of families that had an annual income that was below the poverty level,

which is down from 22.7% in 2010. An estimated 16,227 families in the district were

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[22] U.S. Census Bureau, "Quick Facts New York,"
http://census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/36,00 (accessed October 19, 2016).

[23] U.S. Census Bureau, "Quick Facts New York City, New York,"
http://census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/3651000,00 (accessed October 19, 2016).

[24] N.Y.C. Dept. of City Planning, "Brooklyn Community District 17,"
http://www1.nyc.gov/site/planning/community/community-portal-1.page?cd=bk17 (accessed October 19, 2016).

[25] N.Y.C. Dept. of City Planning, "ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates,"
http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/data-maps/nyc-population/acs/puma-demo-10to12_acs.pdf#bk17 (accessed October 19, 2016)

recipients of some form of public assistance.[26] In 2014, 35.9% of the District populace were recipients of public income support, which is up from 33.1% in 2005.[27]

For this community, these numbers indicate a serious need for employment to provide economic stability so individuals in the community can financially sustain themselves. The District unemployment rate was 8.1%, with 35.6% of the employed working in service occupations in the private sector with a median household income of $46,327; and 14.4% of families lived below the poverty level.[28]

These figures also give a strong indication that there needs to be development of commercial businesses to establish employment opportunities for community residents. In 2014 there were approximately 202 vacant lots, and there is a steadily decreasing number of city owned properties within the District.[29]

Housing

Community District reporting indicated that there was also a rapid acquisition of multiple dwelling properties and construction of large apartment buildings for ethnic and religious constituents. This resulted in a large number of complaints of overdevelopment in the community. This unprecedented development trend has led to increased numbers of displaced residents who were unable to afford the increased cost of housing. In 2013 the housing foreclosure rate (per 1,000 1-4 family properties) was 37.2. Community

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[26] N.Y.C. Dept. of City Planning, "Selected Economic Characteristics," http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/data-maps/nyc-population/acs/puma_econ_10to12_acs.pdf#bk17 (accessed October 19, 2016).

[27] N.Y.C. Dept. of City Planning, "Brooklyn Community District 17."

[28] N.Y.C. Dept. of City Planning, "Selected Economic Characteristics."

[29] N.Y.C. Dept. of City Planning, "Brooklyn Community District 17."

District 17 officials acknowledge this trend and plan to explore rezoning laws to hinder predatory developers operating within the District.

The displacement of residents and the lack of affordable housing has contributed to the increase of illegal home conversions for housing and unlicensed home improvement construction, such as using private garages for business purposes. This puts residents at risk, and has resulted in District officials requesting assistance from the Buildings Department to monitor existing and new construction.[30]

Multifamily dwellings of 20 or more units comprise 28.5% of District housing. The majority of the dwellings are over 75 years old with 61.5% of the units built before the year 1940. Residents of these units are overwhelmingly renters with 66.1% of the units being renter-occupied.[31]

One drawback in this development is that Community District research indicated that infrastructure within the district makes the community susceptible to flooding of homes, and extensive road repairs need to be completed. For social and community services, there are 7 mental health facilities, and a total of 21 food pantries and soup kitchens to aid in meeting the needs of individuals within the community who are seeking these services.

Residential housing that was within ¼ mile of a public park was 63.1%, which was significantly less than the borough-wide percentile of 86%. Metropolitan Transit

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[30] N.Y.C. Dept. of City Planning, "Statement of Community District Needs," http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/neigh_info/statement_needs/bk17_statement.pdf (accessed January 10, 2016).

[31] N.Y.C. Dept. of City Planning, "Selected Housing Characteristics," http://www.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/data-maps/nyc-pupulation/acs/puma_housing_10to12_acs.pdf.#bk17 (accessed October 19, 2016).

Authority bus lines B8, B12, B17, and B46 provides transportation services within the District. Approximately 66% of the residents relied on daily public transportation. Although there are four Mass Transit bus commuter lines that provide services in the District, many commuters rely heavily on commuter vans because of inadequate bus services during rush hours.[32]

Education

Public schools in the District are overcrowded. The high school graduation rate was 34.4%, the dropout rate was 14.5%, and only 6.1% of graduating students were considered college ready.[33] Graduating high school students with Regents Diplomas were significantly below state average, and students that were rated as college ready were significantly below the city average for high school seniors.[34]

As with other Districts comprised mostly of ethnic minority students, there was a consistent pattern of underperformance when data was compared to Districts comprised of mostly Caucasians students. To bring attention to the disparate results along racial lines, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) filed a complaint with the United Stated Department of Education alleging discriminatory testing practices administered by New York City Department of Education. Citywide minority students comprised approximately 70% of the city's eighth grade school student

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[32] Ibid.

[33] N.Y.C. Dept. of City Planning, "Statement of Community District Needs."

[34] N.Y.C. Dept. of Education, 2014-205 School Quality Snapshot/HS," https://schols.nyc.gov/OASchoolReposrts/2014-15/School_Quality_snapshot_2015_HS.k533.pdf (accessed January 10, 2016).

body, but only 11% of those students were accepted to any of the city's specialized high schools.[35]

The NAACP alleged that discriminating entrance exams also excluded minorities from the city's elite high schools. In 2014, out of 952 eighth grade students who were matriculated into Stuyvesant High School, 7 were black, and 21 were Hispanic. Out of 968 eighth graders admitted to Bronx High School of Science, 18 were Black and 50 were Hispanic.[36]

Youth

In District 17 the 18 years old and under population was 35,772, yet, there was a dire need of Youth Centers and publicly funded recreational facilities to accommodate them. There has been a push by District officials to secure funding for job training, youth education, after school tutoring, and summer youth employment opportunities. There are also needs for English as a second language for youth. There is one Police Precinct to patrol the streets in this district, which is the 67th Police Precinct. District officials have requested augmented police presence for crime control and gun violence. There has also been a request for additional detectives to help solve crimes within the community. The District also requests an expansion of the Police Athletics League (PAL) in the 67th Precinct.[37]

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[35] N.A.A.C.P. Legal Defense Fund, "Admission Figures to Specialized High Schools," http://www.naacpldf.org/news/monique-lin-luse-talks-admissions-figurs-specialized-high-schools (accessed October 19, 2016).

[36] N.A.A.C.P. Legal Defense Fund, "New York City Specialized High School Complaint,"http://www.naacpldf.org/update/new-york-city-councilmembers-introduce-measures-expand-access-specialized-high-schools (accessed October 19, 2016).

[37] N.Y.C. Dept. of City Planning, "Statement of Community District Needs."

CHAPTER 2
THE BACKGROUND

The United Stated portrays itself as a symbol of unprejudiced justice by using the image of Lady Justice, who is blind-folded and holding a sword and scale. This image is intended to depict an impartial and equal trial of justice. The tenets of Lady Justice are idealistic and provide a sound framework for structures of justice. However, in humanity, the dynamics of human influences and inputs upon and within social structures cannot be minimized. Consequently, those that are the most influential financially and socially are afforded the greatest opportunities to impose their beliefs on these structures. This would leave those that are less influential lacking the ability, power or position to influence systematic change.

Influential figures, be it in the public or private sectors, view the socioeconomic system through a privileged lens, which inform not only standards of living, but the microcosms of equity, equality, and rules of justice which we live by. Minority communities have been underrepresented and underserved with much needed resources to stimulate sustaining change in living conditions and standards.

Quality and affordable public services such as health and education are not easily found in minority enclaves. Nationally, public schools spent $334 more on every white student than on every student that was nonwhite. Schools that had mostly white students spent $744 more per student than students in mostly nonwhite schools. The greater the

numbers of students of color in public schools, the greater the gap between black and white students.[38]

Public Education

The disadvantages of minority youth, particularly from black minority communities, begin with being educationally disadvantaged. Although education is but one aspect in the formation of productive adolescent development, it is a significant one. In the New York City public school system, the differences between black and white students are greater than the national average. Schools in minority communities illuminate the differences and disadvantages of the racial divide in education that best illustrate the systematic marginalization of minorities.[39]

These schools have been likened to correctional institutions by some in the public-school system as well as by some independent observers. The bolstered presence of School Safety Agents (SSAs) can create the perception that schools in minority communities are regimented by the police. In 1999, there were more SSAs in the New York City school system than officers in the police departments of Boston, Detroit, or Washington D.C. There were more SSAs per students than the city of Houston had police officers per person.[40] Every day, more than 100,000 students have to pass through metal detectors daily.

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[38] Ary Spatig-Amerikaner, *Unequal Education: Federal Loophole Enables Lower Spending on Students of Color* (Washington, DC: Center for American Progress, 2012), 7-8.

[39] New York Civil Liberties Union, "School to Prison Pipeline: A Look at School Safety," http://www.nyclu.org/schooltoprison/lookatsafety (accessed October 19, 2016).

[40] Ibid.

While the safety of students in public schools is necessary, the financial resources devoted to policing schools in minority communities are much greater than in non-minority schools. The cost associated with policing predominately minority schools could be used in other areas of education which would be beneficial to minority students. Areas that are integral to fundamental education in scholastic competitiveness are adversely affected, putting minority students at an academic disadvantage, which directly impact prospects for higher learning opportunities. In respect to income and quality education, the minority students of over policed schools suffer because of low family income levels.

In 2005, approximately 82 percent of the students attending schools with metal detectors were black or Latino and 60 percent of them were living in poverty. The city spent on average $9,602 per student attending schools with metal detectors, and $11,282 per student attending schools without metal detectors. If schools with metal detectors had a student population of 3,000 or more, the spending per student decreased to $8,066. Students that went to schools that had metal detectors were 48 percent more likely to be suspended than students that did not attend schools with metal detectors.[41]

The better the education that young black males received, the less likely they were to be incarcerated and subject to the criminal justice system. Further, as black males were less likely to complete high school and college than black females, there was an urgent need for a system of intervention to insure the stability of black families.[42] Studies have shown that the nexus between education and criminality is strong. The disparate

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[41] Ibid.

[42] Sarah R. Crissey, Nichole Scanniello and Hyon B. Shin, *The Gender Gap in Education Attainment: Variation by Age, Race, Ethnicity and Nativity in the United State* (Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau Housing and Household Economic Statistics Division, 2007), 2.

differences in education between white males and black males are reflected in the increased incarceration rate of 23% for black males.[43]

This disadvantage in education puts black males in a situation where they must actively seek opportunities which may enable them to compete with their white counterparts in skillsets and marketability. President Barak Obama credits the education he received as the catalyst which enabled him to further his aspirations which eventually led to him being the 44th President of the United States.

Income Disparity

While education undeniably offers the prospect of higher earnings in many fields of employment, the reality of the black-white wage gap still exists. The disparate income levels of Blacks and Whites in the corporate structure are in need of correction. Blacks earn less than their white counterparts at every level, regardless of the education they attain. In fact, the black-white wage gap increases with the levels of education.[44]

Since 1979, the income disparity between Blacks and Whites has grown the most for those that attained a bachelor's degree or higher. While it is a disadvantage not to have higher education, the racial discrimination of Blacks in the corporate work force dictates that education alone cannot correct the wrongs of inequality. The influence of those in positions of authority who can stimulate systematic change must be felt on multiple levels. In order for sustaining change to take place, there may have to be

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[43] Lance Lochner and Enrico Moretti, "The Effect of Education on Crime: Evidence from Prison Inmates, Arrests, and Self-Reporting," 2, http://eml.berkeley.edu/~moretti/lm46.pdf (accessed January 28, 2017).

[44] Valerie Wilson, "African Americans are Paid Less than Whites at Every Education Level," (Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute, October 4, 2016), http://www.epi.org/publication/african-americans-are-paid-less-than-Whites-at-every-education-level/ (accessed January 28, 2017).

compliance checks of hiring processes, promotions, payment to minorities, payment to

women, as well as strict enforcement of anti-discrimination laws.[45]

Single Parent Homes

Statistics have shown that overall, African American children had a high

probability of living with their mothers in a single parent home. Approximately 16% of

White children lived with their mothers in a single-family home, and Latino children

were at approximately 27%. Approximately 52% of African American children were

likely to live in a single-family home situation.[46] These are distressing numbers that

perpetuates an alarming trend: the likelihood of young black men being negatively

impacted by the criminal justice system.

The disparity along racial lines for low-income children living with their single

mothers is a social issue. While 35% of White and Latino single mothers were living in

low income households, African American single mothers were at approximately 66%.[47]

This has also resulted in an increase in the need for single mothers to seek public aid such

as food stamps in order to provide for their children much more than their White and

Latino counterparts.[48]

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[45] Ibid., 1-2.

[46] Mark Mather, *U.S. Children in Single-Mother Families* (Washington, DC: Population Reference Bureau, 2010), 1.

[47] Ibid., 2.

[48] Rich Morin, "The Politics and Demographics of Food Stamp Recipients," (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2013), 1-2, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/07/12/the-politics-and-demograhics-of-food-stamp-recipients (accessed October 22, 2016).

Criminalization of Black Men

There is a nexus between education and opportunities of competitive employment with higher incomes. The criminalization of black men has collateral repercussions which are detrimental to them personally in addition to having social implications. For example, in New York State convicted felons may temporarily or permanently be disqualified from voting, obtaining or using a passport, obtaining (or cause to lose) certain professional licenses, from child adoption or becoming a foster parent, from obtaining federal financial aid for higher learning, from enlisting in the armed forces, from obtaining or living in public housing, and from obtaining a plethora of local, state, and federal jobs. These are just a few of the restrictions.[49]

These restrictions and consequences imposed by criminal conviction disproportionately impact black men. This inequality relegates black men to social and economic marginalization. Black men have been, and continued to be disproportionate subjects of arrest and prosecution by the criminal justice system. This empirical fact has many layers of implications which perpetuate significant socioeconomic challenges to the many families that are impacted by this reality. Families of black men that are incarcerated or branded as felons are disproportionately impacted, and one of the greatest impacts that may perpetuate this injustice is often felt by their children.[50]

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[49] Harold Baer, Jr., "Collateral Consequences of Conviction: A reminder of Some Possible Civil Penalties," 1-12, https://www.nysba.org/uploadedFiles/NYSBA/Sections/Criminal_Justice/Records_of_Conviction/BaerCollateralConsequences-WEB.pdf.

[50] Charlene Wear Simmons, *Children of Incarcerated Parents* (Sacramento: California Research Bureau, 2000), 10.

In many situations, the children of black men, particularly male children, also become subjects of the criminal justice system. Statistics of children with incarcerated fathers reveal that they suffer in their development. Nearly 29% of these children had learning difficulties in school, and 27% had behavioral problems.[51]

The compromising of the family structure by the incarceration of the male clearly has negative results on the children, which puts them at a disadvantage in structured learning environments. This disadvantage directly impacts the prospects of higher education, which is a strong indicator of future earning potential. The absence of black men from their families also has a disproportionate impact on their families financially because of the loss of their income due to incarceration.

The criminalization of black men has led to high incarceration rates of black men. From 2000 to 2010 the US population grew by 9.7%. Comparatively, the black population, or those that were identified as black alone or in combination with one or more other races grew 15%, (which is considerably greater than the national percentage of growth), increased the number of Blacks nationally to 14% in 2010.[52]

Mass Incarceration

The racial make-up of the inmate population is drastically different from the racial makeup nationally. Over the last forty years, the United States has been the world leader of citizen incarceration by far. The United States is the third most populace country globally, behind China and India, and comprises approximately 4.7% of the world

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[51] Ibid., 4.

[52] U.S. Census Bureau, "Black or African American Population: 2000 and 2010," http://census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-06.pdf (accessed October 19, 2016).

population.[53] Yet the United Stated had 22% of the world prison population, which drastically exceeded the prison population of any other country globally.[54] The prison system in the United States has grown drastically over the last four decades, and has turned into an economic engine in many regions.

The Corrections Corporation of America and Geo Group Inc. are two of the largest publicly traded entities whose economic engine is the prison industry. There are communities in various regions of the United States which rely on the prison system to fuel their economy, and correctional institutions are their largest employers. These privately owned and operated prisons have contractual agreements with the government.

These prisons have also been the subject of investigations by the Department of Justice for being unsafe, more punitive, and for being operated by unskilled and untrained correctional personnel. In contrast with federal government prisons, inmates were 28% more likely to be assaulted, and there were also increased confiscations of contraband, low quality of food, and lack of medical care.[55]

Mass incarceration is delineated along racial and ethnic lines across every region of the United States. One study indicated that Blacks are five times more likely than Whites, and Hispanics are approximately twice as likely as Whites to be incarcerated. Although Blacks comprised approximately 13% of the national population, they

[53] U.S. Census Bureau, "U.S. and World Population Clock," http://census.gov/popclock (accessed October 31, 2016).

[54] Roy Walmsley, "World Prison Population List," (London: International Centre for Criminal Policy Research, 2015), 1-2. http://www.prisonstudies.org/sites/default/files/resources/downloads/world_prison_population_list_11th_edition.pdf (accessed October 31, 2016).

[55] Helen Fair, *International Prison News Digest,* July–August 2016, 4-5. http://www.prisonstudies.org/sites/default/files/resources/downloads/international_prison_news_digest_july_-_august_2016.pdf (accessed October 31, 2016).

comprised 40% of the nation's incarcerated population. A recent study indicated that the percentage of incarcerated Blacks dropped 2.2% to account for 37.8% of the prison population nationally since 2010.[56] In New York State, Blacks comprise approximately 16% of the population, but were overwhelmingly the largest racial group in prisons with an incarceration rate of 53%.[57]

These are alarming numbers for black men. There is clearly an empirical trend of black men being negatively impacted by the criminal justice system. Most alarming, perhaps, is the increased incarceration of young black men when they should be entering their most productive years. Although the incarceration rate from 1980 to 2000 rose nationally for Blacks as well as Whites, it rose disturbingly high among less educated black men in the age group of 20-24.

In 1980 this age group of black men represented 10% of the incarcerated, and by 2000 they represented 30% of the incarcerated. In fact, the 20-24 age group of black men was more likely to be incarcerated than employed, because the unemployment rate for that particular group in 2000 was 19%.[58] One repercussion of this disparate incarceration statistic is that the median household income also widened between the black-white household income levels.

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[56] Federal Bureau of Prisons, "Inmate Race," http://www.bop.gov/about/statistics/statistics_inmate_race.jsp (accessed October 19, 2016).

[57] Leah Sakala, "Breaking Down Mass Incarceration in the 2010 Census: State-by-State Incarceration Rates by Race/Ethnicity," Northampton, MA: Prison Policy Initiative: (2014), 1-5, http://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/rates.html (accessed October 22, 2016).

[58] George Gao, "Chart of the Week: The black-white gap in incarceration rates," (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2014), 1-2, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/07/18/chart-of-the-week-the-black-white-gap-in-incarceration-rates (accessed October 22, 2016).

Death Penalty

Black men were also disproportionately executed under the death penalty laws in States that have the death penalty. For example, in Washington state black men were three times more likely than white men to receive death sentences for similar criminal cases. In Louisiana the odds of black men receiving death sentences was 97% higher when the victim was white, than for white men if the victim was black. In California, the odds of black men receiving death sentences were over three times higher for killing white victims than for killing black victims, and over four times more likely in being sentenced to death for killing Latinos.[59]

A comprehensive study of the death penalty in North Carolina revealed that the odds of receiving a death sentence rose 3.5 times for Blacks when the victims were white. In 96% of the states that carried out death sentences, there was a pattern of either race-of-defendant or race-of-victim discrimination, or both. Since 1976, 35% of death penalty defendants that were executed were black.

Further, over 75% of the murder victim cases which resulted in executions were white, even though nationally only 50% of the murder victims were white. Currently, Blacks comprise 42% of death row inmates which is the same percentage as their white counterparts. Geographically, the states in the South were more than six times higher in imposing the death sentence than any other region, with the exception of Texas and Oklahoma.[60]

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[59] Death Penalty Information Center, "Facts about the Death Penalty," http://www.Deathpenaltyinfo.org/documents/FactSheet.pdf (accessed October 22, 2016).

[60] Ibid., 1-3.

There is a significant number of pending death sentence cases which are currently in litigation in the judicial system. These cases are being closely monitored by several independent groups, most notably the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund.[61] These disturbing statistics further underscore systemic disparities allotted black men by the criminal justice system. There is no single factor which could contribute to such a disparity in criminalization, but there are strong indicators that drug offences are a major contributor to the incarceration of Blacks. As of August 2016, approximately 46.4% of all inmates nationally were incarcerated for drug offences.[62] The next two highest offenses that accounted for incarceration by percentage were weapons at 16.8% and immigration violations at 8.8%.

Consequences of Drug Laws

The plague of drugs in minority communities has been a major obstacle to social development and safety for their residents. Since the epidemic of crack-cocaine in the 1980s, Blacks have been its greatest victims. Cocaine, be it in powder or crack form was the primary drug which accounted for 54% of the prison population. Blacks comprised 88% of crack-cocaine offenders, Hispanics or Latinos were 54% of cocaine offenders, and Whites were 48% of methamphetamine offenders. The addiction to drugs caused criminality or was the reason for many first-time offenders. Approximately 35% of drug

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[61] N.A.A.C.P. Legal Defense and Education Fund, "Death Row U.S.A. Summer 2016," http://www.naacpldf.org/files/publications/DRUSA_Summer_2016.pdf (accessed October 22, 2016).

[62] Federal Bureau of Prisons, *Offenses* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2016), http://www.bop.gov/about/statistics/statistics_inmate_offenses.jsp (accessed October 22, 2016).

offenders that were sentenced to serve prison time had either no, or a minimal criminal history.[63]

Crack-cocaine which plagued minority communities caused the harshest sentences to be meted out, followed by heroin offenders, and then powder cocaine offenders. Approximately one third of crack-cocaine offenders had their prison sentences increased because of the use of weapons when committing drug offenses, which subjected them to mandatory minimum sentencing. The average prison sentence for drug offenders in federal prison was 11.3 years. However, in crack-cocaine offenses, sentences averaged more than 14 years in prison.[64]

The impact of drugs, particularly crack-cocaine, in minority communities has been devastating to these communities. There have been numerous empirical studies to validate claims of racial disparities to the detriment of communities of color from controlled substance laws and mandates of the criminal justice system. Approximately 25% of adults that were incarcerated in New York City came from communities that comprise of 4% of the city's adult population. Of this amount, more than half are incarcerated for narcotics offenses and 97% are Black or Hispanic.[65]

In the early 1970s, there was an increase in drug addiction and drug related crime in New York. In response to the increased criminality related to drugs, Nelson A. Rockefeller, who was the Governor of New York State, enacted what is known as the

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[63] Sam Taxy, Julie Samuels and William P. Adams, *Drug Offenders in Federal Prisons: Estimates of Characteristics Based on Linked Data* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2015), 1-4, http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/dofp12.pdf (accessed October 22, 2016).

[64] Ibid., 6.

[65] New York Civil Liberties Union, "Rockefeller Drug Laws Cause Racial Disparities, Huge Taxpayer Burden," http://www.nyclu.org/node/1764 (accessed October 22, 2016).

Rockefeller Drug Laws. The Governor believed these laws would decrease drug usage

and drug related crimes by imposing severe and mandatory penalties on drug offenders.

These laws took away sentencing discretion from judges and empowered prosecutors to

combat drug related offenses in partnership with the law enforcement community.[66] The

Rockefeller Drug Laws have greatly contributed to the mass incarceration of black men

since its enactment.

In 1980, the drug related prison population was comprised of 32% Whites, 38%

Blacks, and 29% Latinos. By 1992 the incarceration percentile was 5% Whites, 50%

Blacks, and 44% Latino. The percentage of minorities incarcerated for drug offenses has

remained close to these statistics through the first decade of new millennium.

Interestingly, a government study of approximately 1.8 million adults in New York which

comprised of 13 percent of the adult population, reported that 1.3 million of those

surveyed reported using illegal drugs, and 72% of the reported users were White.[67]

Another law that furthered the incarceration of black men at an alarming rate and

in disparate proportion was the "Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of

1994." In contrast to the Rockefeller Drug Laws, the Violent Crime Control and Law

Enforcement Act (commonly known as the Clinton Crime Bill), has a much wider scope

of laws which contributed to mass incarceration.

This law expanded the Federal death penalty to cover approximately 60 additional

offenses; provided new and harsher penalties for drug crimes by gang members;

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[66] Lisa R. Nakdai, "Are New York's Rockefeller Drug Laws Killing the Messenger for the Sake of the Message?" *Hofstra Law Review* 30, no. 5 (2001): 1-2, http://scholarlycommons.law.hofstra.edu/hlr/vol30/iss2/5 (accessed November 8, 2016).

[67] NYCLU, "Rockefeller Drug Laws," 1-4.

authorized adult prosecution of those 13 years of age and older charged with certain

serious violent crimes, tripling the maximum penalties for the use of guns near protected

zones, schools, playgrounds and youth prone locations; enacted a mandatory three strikes

rule which meted out mandatory life imprisonment without the possibility of parole for

Federal offenders with three or more convictions of drug trafficking crimes; and in

addition, provided an unprecedented $9.7 billion for the building and expansion of

prisons.[68] These are a few of the many amendments to penalties for various crimes.

William (Bill) Clinton was the sitting president when this bill was enacted, and

signed this bill into law. The tough on crime policies that were passed during the Clinton

Administration's tenure resulted in the largest incarceration increase in federal and state

prisons of any president in American history.[69]

During Clinton's tenure, the nation quadrupled its prison population. Not

surprisingly, black communities were impacted the greatest by this incarceration boom

and the criminal justice system. Between 1980 and 1999, the incarceration rate more than

tripled for Blacks. It increased from 1156 per 100,000 to 3620 per 100,000. The prison

population added nearly 700,000 inmates under the tenure of Clinton. By the end of his

administration, he professed that the entire prison policy needs to be re-examined.[70]

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[68] Fact Sheet, "Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994," (Washington, DC: U.S. Dept. of Justice, 1994), 1-6, www.ncjrs.gov/txtfiles/billfs.txt (accessed November 14, 2016).

[69] Justice Policy Institute, "Too Little Too Late: President Clinton's Prison Legacy" (Washington, DC: Justice Policy Institute, 2001), 1-3, http://justicepolicy.org/uploasds/jsuticepolicy/documents/too_little_too_late_pdf (accessed November 14, 2016).

[70] Ibid., 4-10.

Jeremy Travis, who was the president of John Jay College of criminal Justice in New York City stated, "We now know with the fullness of time that we made some terrible mistakes."[71] He claimed it mostly resulted in an increased prison population, and studies have found only a modest relationship between incarceration and lower crime rates.[72] There are some individuals and organizations that advocated against Blacks voting for Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential election because of the Violent Crime Control law and its impact on Blacks. Although she was not the president, she was the first lady and is branded by the Clinton name.[73]

Since the enactment of the Rockefeller Drug Laws and the Clinton Crime Bill, there have been legal steps taken in an attempt to correct the many wrongs and injustices, particularly towards the black community because of these laws. There has been furor from civil and social groups over the years, seeking radical reform of these laws. Nevertheless, these draconian laws have caused considerable harm to many families in Black communities, and especially to Black men

Law Enforcement and the Black Community

As a result, the relationship between law enforcement and the Black community is a contentious one. Strong feelings of distrust exist in black communities towards the police. Highly publicized events of deaths of black men by the police have caused public protests and some violent responses. Unfortunately, these responses have resulted in the

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[71] Carrie Johnson, "20 Years Late, Parts Of Major Crime Bill Viewed As Terrible Mistake," National Public Radio, September 12, 2014), www.npr.org/2014/09/12/347736999/20-years-later-major-crime-bill-viewed-as-terrible-mistake (accessed November 14, 2016).

[72] Ibid.

[73] Michelle Alexander, "Why Hillary Clinton Doesn't Deserve the Black Vote," *The Nation*, February 10, 2016, 1-6, https://www.thenation.com/article/hillary-clinton-does-not-deserve-black-peoples-votes/ (accessed November 14, 2016).

deaths of innocent people, including police officers. The public response of protesters

includes cries of outrage from all races. The list of Blacks who died as a result of law

enforcement further divides the police-community relationship.

Many of these events have been recorded and disseminated on social media.

There have also been claims that the use of social media has brought a heightened

awareness of harsh police practices in their interactions with black communities which

has long been in practice. Several police officers have been criminally indicted for their

actions. Criminal indictments of police officers, even when their actions result in the

death of another while in performance of their duties are rare. Criminal indictments of

law enforcement officers only seem to occur when there is video recording of their

actions. Even with video recordings, criminal indictments are a rarity.

Some have claimed that the lack of indictments of police officers for their actions

against Blacks is because of lack of diversity of prosecutors. A study revealed that 95

percent of the country's elected prosecutors are white, and 83 percent are men. The

percentage of elected prosecutors was higher than that of attorney generals.[74]

Organizations such as "Color of Change" have been actively advocating diversity of

prosecutors in the country. The lack of diversity and the underrepresentation of Blacks in

the criminal justice system have contributed to the feeling of powerlessness in the black

community.

There is public consensus that the nation has yet to achieve racial equality. A

recent survey revealed that approximately 61% of the country believes that changes need

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[74] Amita Kelly, "Does It Matter That 95 Percent of Elected Prosecutors Are White?" National Public Radio, July 8, 2015, www.npr.org/sections/itsallpolitics/2015/07/08/420913118/does-it-matter-that-95-of-elected-prosecutors-are-white (accessed November 8, 2016).

to be made in order for Blacks to have equal rights as Whites. Along racial lines, 43% of

Blacks were skeptics and believed the country will never make changes to achieve equal

rights, 17% of Hispanics are doubtful that changes to achieve equality will transpire, and

11% of Whites believe equality will not happen. Blacks and Whites also disagree on

major factors which constrain Blacks from success, such as institutional racism versus

individual racism.[75]

The views of racial discrimination between Blacks and Whites correlate with the

perception of the police enforcement and performance between Blacks and Whites.

Approximately 33% of Blacks and 75% of Whites stated that the police in their

communities are doing a good job; and Blacks see recent fatal encounters with the police

as a sign of a broader or systemic problem.[76]

After a fatal police encounter in August 2014 in Ferguson, Missouri which

resulted in the death of a black man by the name of Michael Brown, 80% of Blacks stated

that the police encounter illuminated important issues on race and police encounters,

while only 37% of Whites held the same view. An overwhelming majority of Blacks

believe that there are problems with the criminal justice system. This has broadened the

divide between black communities and the police.[77]

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[75] "On Views of Race and Inequality, Blacks and Whites Are Worlds Apart" (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2016), 1-7, http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/files/2016/06/ST_2016.06.27_Race-Inequality-Final.pdf (accessed October 29, 2016).

[76] Richard Morin, Renee Stepler, "The Racial Confidence Gap in Police Performance" (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2016), 1-8, file:///C:/Users/Tom/Downloads/ST_2016.09.29_Police-Final.pdf (accessed 10/29/16).

[77] Bruce Drake, "Divide between Blacks and Whites on Police Runs Deep" (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2015), 1-2, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/04/28/Blacks-Whites-police (accessed October 29, 2016).

The fatal police encounter of Michael Brown thrust the Black Lives Matter movement onto the national stage. Fatal police encounters by black men under questionable circumstances have become a prevalent issue in black communities across the country. In fact, the Black Lives Matter movement has been able to gain supporters from a multitude of races and ethnicities. Approximately 65% of Blacks support the movement as well as 40% of Whites. Although the goal of the movement is not understood by many, the support for the movement remains marginally strong.[78]

The fatal police encounters of black men by police officers have largely caused public unrest where the black men were unarmed. Some of the fatal encounters that fueled the Black Lives Matter movement as well as other social justice and awareness groups are the fatal police encounter of Oscar Grand on New Year's Day in 2009, in Oakland, CA; Jordon Davis in November 2012; Dontre Hamilton in April 2014 in Milwaukee, WI; Walter Scott in April 2014 in Charleston, SC; and Sandra Bland in July 2015 in Waller County, TX.

There are numerous more fatal police encounters that have caused concerns, but the fatal police encounter of Eric Garner in July of 2014 on Staten Island caused a national outcry against the NYPD. The fatal encounter of Eric Garner, following the killing of Treyvon Martin in February of 2012 are viewed by some as the catalyst of current orchestrated social responses to fatal police encounters of unarmed Blacks.

The NYPD was scrutinized for their practice of Stop, Question, and Frisk. There were claims that the practice increased tension between the police and the black

[78] Juliana Horowitz and Gretchen Livingston, "How Americans View the Black Lives Matter Movement," Pew Research Center, July 8, 2016, 1-3, http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/07/08/how-americans-view-the-black-lives-matter-movement (accessed October 29, 2016).

community. An analysis of the practice revealed that since 2002 there were over 5 million individuals that were stopped and frisked, and more than nine out of ten were innocent of crimes. Through the year 2015, approximately 55% stopped and frisked were black, 30% were Latino, and 10% were white.[79]

It is evident that there is systematic detrimental effect on black men within the social and economic structures currently in operation, which results in negative interactions with the criminal justice system. The origins of this may very well be rooted within the historic, social, and economic beginnings of Blacks in the United States. However, the foci of this demonstration project will not go in depth with the dynamics of African American history, but will approach this detriment from a narrower lens of criminal justice perspectives. Together, the members of the site team have over one hundred and fifteen years of experience working within the criminal justice system. This includes Federal, and local law enforcement, as well as correctional and Probational law enforcement. These different perspectives and experiences will be combined in this demonstration project to illuminate realities of the black men in the community in an attempt to positively impact change.

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[79] New York Civil Liberties Union, "Stop and Frisk Data," 1-4, www.nyclu.org/content/stop-and-frisk-data (accessed November 14, 2016).

CHAPTER 3
THE PLAN

In an effort to adequately address the challenge statement in this demonstration project, three primary goals have been established. With each of these three goals, three separate strategies will be used for each of these three goals. Hence, there will be three goals and nine strategies.

Goal One

Goal one is to raise awareness of the social and economic zeitgeist of ethnic minority enclaves, particularly those of the African American community. Communities of color have long been underserved and underrepresented both civically and politically. This reality has plagued black communities for generations.

Communities of color have perpetuated cycles of disadvantage, relegating their residents to employment opportunities that pay low wages in comparison to other races. I believe that it is important to explore these aspects in order to understand, aid and improve the marginalization of black communities.

The research question associated with goal one is "What are the social, economic and cultural factors that lead black males to disproportionate encounters with the criminal justice system?" The stigmatization of the economic engines of black communities limited to fast food restaurants, liquor stores, street vendors and drug dealers has long existed.

Black enclaves have encompassed these ideas as a normative part of the black community. The paradigm of dilapidated and burned out buildings associated with black

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communities began to shift and is steadily changing at an increased pace since the

beginning of the new millennia. This change has resulted in gentrification which is

slowly but steadily pushing out Blacks from the very communities in which they lived for

generations, because they cannot afford to live in their once undesirable neighborhoods.

I believe that Brooklyn, NY is the best example of this paradigm shift. Houses

and buildings which were once overlooked as being undesirable are now subject to

predatory builders and businessmen seeking to acquire property and price out low income

families to increase their bottom lines. The ministerial competency associated with this

goal is prophetic agent.

Strategy one is to present, review, and discuss empirical data of the social

condition of black communities, and the role which black men live by in them. In this

strategy, the status of employment, education, health, housing and education will be

presented for open dialogue with a targeted audience of primarily black men. Attention

will be given to see if the use of law enforcement and the criminal justice system has

knowingly or unknowingly played a role in the marginalization of Blacks, primarily by

targeting black men as subjects of the criminal justice system.

Strategy two is to explore historical facts and data as it relates to African

American contributions in the formation and up building of the United States of America,

particularly the contributions of black men in history. The historical contributions of

African Americans in the United States are broad.

Many Blacks have looked over jokingly accepted racist depictions of Blacks

eating fried chicken and watermelon. This is a perception of Blacks concocted to distort

the many contributions to the advancement of this nation. The notion of inferiority has

been embedded into the psyche of Blacks for decades, and unfortunately many Blacks have accepted these psychological boundaries.

Histories of African American contributions are not routinely taught in the educational system in the United States below college level. Even then, the majority of higher learning institutions do not make African American studies mandatory. An overview of the many contributions of Blacks in the United States and their perseverance through challenges of racism will be presented in an attempted to stoke responses by the participants.

Strategy three is to explore public and private cases and incidents of members who are from black communities who have committed transgressions, or been victimized by other members of the black community. Blacks are mostly victimized by other Blacks. Black on black crime has long been frowned upon in the black community, yet it is something that is perpetuated.

Regarding private cases of transgression, it will require transparency and the willingness to share personal experiences of being victimized or perpetrating an act of transgression against another. Depending on the lasting effects of being victimized or the sensitivity of victimizing someone will dictate the willingness and feasibility of this strategy as well as its effectiveness in an open setting. This will be conducted in open dialogue, primarily with members of the black community.

Goal one will be evaluated by conducting a focus group session related to each of the three strategies. A questionnaire will be administered to ascertain if the presented data is previously acquired information. It will be studied to see if the participants' positions

and views of the black community have changed, and if the information was viewed as being relevant for black men and the criminal justice system.

Goal Two

Goal two is to motivate, inspire, challenge, and encourage the community audience to sensitize towards black men who have had negative interaction with the criminal justice system. The assumption in this goal is that the person(s) of interest is not a hardened, violent, or career criminal. The research question associated with goal two is, "What are the lessons in the Bible regarding responsibility to and for those who need forgiveness, justice, and reconciliation?"

Often those that are released from prison are released back into a society in which they are unwelcomed. Reentry into to society, particularly after being incarcerated for a long period of time is a stressful and challenging reality for many black men. Because of being ostracized, minimized, dismissed or disqualified, many black men regress into destructive or criminal behavior which puts them on paths to being recidivists of the criminal justice system.

The lack of opportunity from being branded as a felon or ex-convict is a reality which the overwhelming majority of previously incarcerated black men experience. The inherent social status of the majority of black men released from prison does not avail them to networks and resources which give them the opportunities of certainty with successful reintegration with main stream society.

The Bible can be used as a vehicle for inspiration and motivation for those that are struggling with this reality, and in preventing regression back into acts of criminality when the feeling of rejection and failure seem overwhelming. The ministerial competency of religious educator will be associated with this goal.

Strategy one is to conduct a group study session with congregants and community members on black male incarceration causes and its effects upon their communities and families. The incarceration of black men is bound with feelings and perceptions of failure. This also negatively impacts black enclaves by removing potentially productive men from their communities which put their families, particularly their children, at a disadvantage.

The impact that mass incarceration of black men has on black communities includes economic, social, and psychological challenges. This is particularly alarming when black men are incarcerated in their prime years of productivity when they should be building foundations for their futures. In this strategy, I will work with the participants to identify possible factors which are catalysts that permeate negative interaction with the criminal justice system.

Strategy two is to conduct a workshop on confronting failures. This will entail addressing some of the core issues that black men deal with that produces frustration and feelings of inadequacy. This will include identifying, defining and learning how to confront feelings of failure in personal and professional settings. After the experience of failure, which is inevitable at some point in life, it is the response to the failure which informs the prospects for future successes.

Coping mechanisms and failure resolution methodologies are not routinely presented as venues of resources for black men. In fact, the majority of black men isolate themselves in frustration after they have experienced failure. The healthy channeling of frustration as opposed to counterproductive or destructive actions after failure is vital in the enhancement of constructive resilience and perseverance when failure is experienced.

The aim of this strategy is to give a framework to failure response, and encourage critical thinking to overcome failures. Many who have been successful learned from their experiences of failure, and built upon their responses to the failure which ultimately led to their being successful. The cycle of trial, error, and retrial will be strongly encouraged.

Strategy three is to present and discuss a contemporary movie in dialogue with the Bible. Among the movies in consideration are the *Shawshank Redemption*, *Glory*, and *Courageous*. This will allow the participants who may or may not have viewed the movie before to look at it from a lens other than entertainment.

Often movies are watched for entertainment purposes and lessons or teachings within them are missed or overlooked because of the stimulation of being entertained. The Bible will be used to engage the participants to reveal relevance and realities to their lives in conjunction with the movie. Although the Bible is historical, it still speaks to the lives of people. Aspects of justice, reconciliation, forgiveness and perseverance will be honed upon in this strategy.

Goal two will be evaluated by receiving verbal and or written feedback from the participants. The level of enthusiasm to see or facilitate methods of transformation and change towards a more meaningful relation with private and public entities, communities, and society by the participants will aid in determining the effectiveness of goal two.

Goal Three

Goal three is to find practical ways to help reclaim black men who have been negatively impacted by the criminal justice system in order for them to become active contributors in churches and communities. Black men, particularly those which have been incarcerated for years often feel detached with their communities and society when

they return from prison. During their times of incarceration, changes in their communities, society, even their respective families take place.

Their reintegration into their communities and/or with their families may be accompanied by feelings of powerlessness, lack of control, or irrelevancy. Methods of actions in family and social settings which were productive or effective before incarceration may have become ineffective or antiquated upon release from prison. In these instances, a period of refamiliarization may be needed to learn how to adjust to these changes. Learning how to productively confront failures can be a valuable skill in dealing with reclamation.

Black men should be intentional with reintegration into communities by observing and learning of and about the changes which transpired in their absence. The failure of this period of observation and learning may easily result in feelings of frustration which can lead to unproductive responses. This period of observation is important for all, but is critical for black men with Type A Behavior Patterns.

This strategy will help to mitigate frustrations and the feelings of not being in charge or knowing answers. It is also important for black men to know how to conduct themselves in encounters with law enforcement. Actions and responses to questions while dealing with law enforcement officers can sometimes escalate or de-escalate situations. In this era of social media and video recording capabilities on smart phones, the actions, demeanors, and language used work in concert with interpretation, can harm or help anyone who has an encounter with law enforcement officers.

The research question associated with goal three is, "How can we build and incorporate black men impacted by the criminal justice system back into the community

and church?" The absence of black men because of incarceration has adverse and collateral implications to their families, community economics, as well as to the social stability where they live. There should be intentional effort to instill feelings of relevancy and worth to help rebuild the confidence of black men reintegrating into communities.

One concern in this project is the prospect of re-incarceration of those who were currently released from prison. This would further destabilize the families and communities which are already dealing with insufficient resources, further imbedding them in undesirable situations.

The church should be an institution which aids in the restoration of hope, desirability, and relevancy into the lives of those dealing with issues of restoration. The Black Church has historically been a refuge for marginalized and underrepresented Blacks. Blacks were subject to people and policies of individuals and or institutions which swayed social clout to further their agendas, to the detriment of the black community. The ministerial competency associated with this goal is leadership.

Strategy one is to conduct a forum on police encounters to inform and educate participants of appropriate actions and conduct when they have an encounter with the police. The interpretation of language, voice tone, movements and dispositions are all factors when you encounter police officers.

The perspective of police officers may very well be different from the civilians they interact with. Police encounters may or may not be for valid reasons, based on information which may be unknown to the individual(s) encountering with the police. The responses by those encountering the police can influence reactions.

Being able to prudently interact with law enforcement officers, be it verbal or in motion sometimes will dictate the outcome of the interaction. This forum will attempt to provide informed responses by the participants when interacting with the police and law enforcement officers in order to aid in reaching the goal.

Strategy two is to conduct a workshop for disseminating information and skill building to the participants. It is desired that this would aid and encourage them to have a healthy dialogue between themselves, the church, and the community in partnership with restoring productivity in their lives.

Black men have been and continue to be negatively impacted by the criminal justice system. The feelings of being marginalized and detached from society because of incarceration can be difficult to recover from. The participants need to know that the church is there as an institution to help facilitate restoration.

Strategy three is to hold a communal celebration to affirm black men and the churches commitment to join together in partnership. This celebration is to recognize any accomplishments regardless of how broad or small that may have been accomplished. The feeling of accomplishment along with being recognized and encouraged can have positive results in motivation and progress.

This celebration is to include participants of the reintegration process, former prisoners regardless of their race, as well as representatives within the criminal justice system. It is hopeful that this celebration will bring an increased awareness to the community of the need of restoration of former inmates, as well as the inmates recognizing the church as a valuable partner in the restorative process.

Goal three will be evaluated by the overall response to the request for supportive systems and awareness of the need to address black men that have been impacted by the criminal justice system. In evaluating this goal, the complete impact may not be evident in a communal celebration or be evident to the knowledge of anyone aiding the process of restoration.

CHAPTER 4
SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL FACTORS

This chapter will expound upon the three research questions that are associated with each respective goal within the plan of implementation. Research question number one was "What are some of the social, economic and cultural factors that lead black males to disproportionate encounters with the criminal justice system?" In exploring this research question, the here and now issues are intended to be brought forth.

Contemporary issues that black men are challenged with within and outside of their communities are put in the forefront to help give direction to relevant subject matter. This will also entail looking at some historical contributions of black men in the formation of the history of the United States of America. In this research question I will theorize on the question of how meaning is made for black men.

Social Identity and Awareness

Societal identity of ethnic groups and enclaves are subject to generic thumb print stigmas which identifies them as a people. Some of these identifiers are language, food, appearance, heritage, or some other commonality which is unique to them. Indigent groups are usually identified by negative stereotyping by others who are in more privileged social and or economic positions in main stream society.

These social identities essentially brand and classify groups. These identities also encroach on community perceptions which impose characteristics, which if sustained for a period of time lead to these characterized identities being embraced by those who have not or cannot envision any other identity which they believe is attainable by them.

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These impositions then lead to psychophysiological schisms of individuals from mainstream society, creating consensual feelings of difference and otherness. The Nida Institute for Biblical Scholarship illuminated this lens of difference and otherness for me, which I realized is befitting in describing the correlation of black men and the criminal justice system.

Identities of personhood and community by authoritarians have connotations of inferiority to the marginalized because of realities which inform differences and otherness from those perceived as inferior. This also stokes an insider-outsider mindset which affirms difference and otherness, which is also essentially a part of human identity. Difference personified in stereotypical depictions impact identity formation and can easily lead to sustained marginalized realities of inferiority imposed by those in positions of power. This factual aspect is affirmed in humanity through the quest for the acquisition of authority, power and control. This is well recorded throughout history.

Meaning is made by personal and communal awareness of difference in correlation with otherness. Identity and the formation of identity then bring awareness of individualization as well as community identity which brings contrast to difference in opposition to that which is the other. Difference informs justification and the maintenance of authority by those in positions of control, and reinforces positions of dominance through alterity and the restraint of the other.

The interpretation of the other will have opposing differences which presupposes the position of the interpreters, which is rooted in their reality which gives them meaning and understanding of how the meaning was made. Ferdinand de Saussure stated,

"Meaning is constructed through linguistic opposition rather than through absolute reference." [80]

The construct of meaning for black men has historical relevancy which from the onset of colonialization and formation of systems of governance by pre-colonial thinkers, presupposed superiority of ethos and purpose. This perception of the other by the pre-colonial founders of governance systems of the United States gave justification to the imposition of dominance through force, leading to the subjugation of the other because of difference.

This pre-colonial approach sustained itself through colonization by the use of force and by maintaining dominance through systems of law. These laws became an essential aspect of reality and rules of justice which expanded to include subsumable events to reinforce difference and control. The formation of these systems of laws was critically studied by social scientist Max Weber.[81]

From the pre-colonial era through colonization, systems of laws and controls to sustain dominance of the other steadily increased, giving validation and justification to imperious concepts of superiority over the other. Meaning for contemporary black men was largely formed in the United States by conception and elasticity of the structural and systematic framework of laws and governance. The marginalization of black men by the dominant has been woven into the fabric of formation of social structures. It is so deeply

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[80] Ferdinand de Saussure, "Course in General Linguistics: Part One General Principle," *Critical Theory Since Plato*, ed. Hazard Adams, 717-726 (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1992).

[81] Peter Kivisto, *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*, 4th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 68-73.

embedded that the correction and extrapolation of contemporary effects from historical acts of oppression are far-fetched.[82]

For black men, meaning was made by the sustained imposition of inferiority in the construct of self-identity which became a part of the black psyche, essentially erecting psychological boundaries. These psychological boundaries created limits of vision and imagination relegating black men to subservience.[83] One major effect on contemporary black men in the formation of the making of meaning was the exclusion from monetary sovereignty. The notion that money equals power eluded black men because they were not owners of themselves.

The marginalization of black men from the onset of colonization impacted social positioning through industrialization, greatly excluding them from the generational prospect of having 'old money'. For black men alterity and difference in the construct of meaning and self-identity gave little to no venue in the growth of capitalism in the capitalist revolution. The exclusion from "The Spirit of Capitalism" is an historical era to which doors have long been shut, leaving black men on the outside as the other. In this postmodern era of technology, there have been sparse anomalies of success by some from the creation of new markets and economic engines. However, it is seldom that black men are in the forefront of these new monetary venues.[84]

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[82] Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, eds., *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 87-91.

[83] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, trans. Richard Philcox (New York: Grove Press, 2008), 120-185.

[84] Kivisto, *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*, 74-78.

How meaning is made for back men has multifaceted historical and contemporary implications. The historical construct of identity has sustained repercussions on the contemporary state of black men. These repercussions in many ways have been a sustained blight upon black men. Social dogma and perceptions of inferiority and inadequacy of black men seems to have endured from the suppressive laws of pre-colonization. Superiority over black men because of difference therefore has a strong nexus to black men experiencing disparate negative interactions with the criminal justice system.

Economic Status

I held an open discussion at United Community Baptist Church (UCBC) of which I am the pastor. On Saturday mornings the church hosts a feeding program. This feeding program attracts male and female program participants, but the overwhelming majority of the participants are black males. Although the focus of the discussion was crafted towards the socioeconomic plight of black men and their current state in the community and with the criminal justice system, the program participants were multiethnic and multicultural.

After the morning feeding program concluded, I invited the program participants along with parishioners of UCBC to engage in open dialogue regarding the socioeconomic status of the community. I also informed the program participants that I would like to discuss their experiences with the criminal justice system, and possible factors which contribute to police-community disconnects. The program participants were surprisingly eager to begin dialogue. Because of the different ethnicities that were present, dialogue was engaged from various perspectives and realities, which I welcomed.

After a brief introduction and prayer, I gave some statistical data on incarceration, employment, and the social state of black men and the community. The program participants (PP) were eager to respond. The first person that wanted to be heard in discussion was a Hispanic male that who had lived in the community for many years, whom I will refer to as PP (A). He stated that over the last decade, he had seen changes in the community regarding construction work that was deeply troubling him.

PP (A) stated that he was a construction worker and was actively looking for work. However, he stated he has been experiencing discrimination and sparse work in construction projects. He claimed construction jobs have been overwhelmingly taken by third-world immigrants that were willing to work for little to nothing. PP (A) charged that Blacks and Latinos are getting less work because they know what construction jobs are worth, and five third-world immigrants will receive the same pay as one black or Latino worker who wanted to receive the value of the work that they were being tasked to do.

The notion of wanting to be paid a fair wage for work caused a period of chatter along with head nodding of approval from a good amount of the participants. There was a consensus that the pay they were receiving for work was unfair, and they were on guard of being taken advantage of by potential employers.

A black male which I will refer to as PP (B) stated that he was a retired senior citizen and had a good education. He stated that there was a lack of care and unity among Blacks which contributed to the depressed state of the black community. He stated that he was not looking for work, but if he was in a situation in which he had to work he would do whatever he could within his capabilities. PP (B) then stated that with his educational background, he would not work for less than fifteen dollars per hour.

He then said that the reality of New York City was that Blacks are hard-pressed to find employment which will pay them fifteen dollars per hour, when employers can find others to do the same work for less pay. PP (B) charged that Blacks need to look for ways in which Blacks could be in positions where they can employ other Blacks.

The notion of Blacks being economically empowered and self-sustained monetarily by black owned and operated economic engines is a notion which has existed for decades. The idea was popularized by Booker T. Washington. In 1900, Washington founded the National Negro Business League (NNBL) which endeavored to "enhance the commercial and economic prosperity of the African American community." [85] The NNBL advocated the networking of black professionals and business owners. A primary goal of the NNBL was to achieve social equality in American society through economic empowerment.

The Nation of Islam, headed by Louis Farrakhan advocated that 16 million wage earners contribute 35 cents a week to a national treasury. In one year the amount in the national treasure would amount to $291 million, which would then be invested in land for farming and agricultural purposes. This investment would then lead to other industrial projects and economic endeavors.[86] The concept of black economic empowerment has morphed with many derivatives since the organization of the NNBL.

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[85] Joseph Bernardo, "National Negro Business League," Blackpast.org, 2014, http://www.blackpast.org/aah/national-negro-business-league (accessed September 19, 2016).

[86] Ashahed M. Muhammad, "Economic Blueprint Offers Black America the Way to Progress," *The Final Call*, November 5, 2013, http://www.finalcall.com/artman/publish/national_news_2/article_100933.shtml (accessed September 19, 2016).

Another black male whom I will refer to as PP (C) wanted to be heard. He stated that the major concerns in the black community are crime, drugs, and housing. PP (C) stated he was an ex-offender that did crimes 35 years ago and also worked on Wall Street for nine years. He said that because of his criminal history he cannot secure a job of his preference, but he wanted to work and would not turn down a job because it only paid $9 per hour and he wanted $15 per hour. PP (C) stated he would take the employment if he could, because it would give him an opportunity to be employed.

PP (C) also claimed that in the community he constantly got stopped by the police who repeatedly claimed that the community was a high crime area, and that was the reason why he was getting stopped. He stated that Blacks were being targeted in the streets by law enforcement, and it should be a major topic of discussion and concern within the black community.

This statement caused excitement in the group. Another male black, PP (D) strongly agreed with PP (C) on the subject of being targeted by law enforcement. PP (D) stated that experienced and older black males, particularly those who were incarcerated need to focus on intervention with young black males. He stated this needed to be done in order to aid in preventing them from becoming incarcerated and a part of the prison system. He said that once young males are in their early twenties, they are difficult to mentor, and the difficulty is intensified if they have already experienced incarceration in state prisons.

One organization that has been effective in mentoring young black men in the community to prevent incarceration is Man Up! Inc. USA, which is based in Brooklyn, NY. Man Up has an anti-gang counseling program which uses former gang members to

counsel young at-risk males, and newly recruited gang members on the realities and consequences of being a gang member.[87]

PP (E) stated that in the community, Blacks must be careful how they greet each other in public. He said if black men are observed shaking hands, passing a cigarette or another item, they are subject to being stopped by the police. He claimed that he was frequently stopped by the police and questioned about the destination he came from, and the destination he is going. He also stated that he was routinely asked if he was in possession of any contraband. PP (E) stated that when he was stopped by the police, he was questioned like a child instead of being spoken to like an adult which contributed to police-community disconnects.

The practice of stop, question, and frisk by the NYPD has been the subject of criticism by many in minority enclaves. In fact, statistics indicated that the practice has been a polarized crime fighting tactic. For example, in 2012 the number of New Yorkers stopped by the police under this practice was 532,911. Of this number, 55 percent were black, 32 percent were Latino, and 10 percent were white. Of the total number of New Yorkers stopped, 89 percent were innocent of any crime.[88]

The practice became a political topic during the 2013 mayoral race in New York City. Bill de Blasio successfully ran for mayor, and many attributed the success of his campaign to his stiff opposition of the stop and frisk practice of the NYPD. During the first six months of 2016, the NYPD reported 7,636 stops of New Yorkers, which was the

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[87] Man Up! Inc. USA, "Antiviolence Program/Anti-Gang Counseling 101," http://www.manupinc.org/anti-violence-program.html (accessed September 19, 2016).

[88] New York Civil Liberties Union, *Stop and Frisk Data* (New York: NYCLU, 2016), 1-4. http://www.nyclu.org/content/stop-and-frisk-data (accessed November 14, 2016).

lowest reported number of stops under this practice by the NYPD since data on stops

were first reported to the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) in 2004.

However, the proportion of stops leading to arrests increased from below 10

percent in 2004, to 20.5 percent in 2016.[89] Nevertheless, between 50 and 60 percent of all

stops since the beginning of data reporting to the NYCLU were Blacks. Regardless of the

number of stops conducted by the NYPD, or the quantity vs quality factor, Blacks were

consistently stopped at an alarmingly high and disproportionate rate in comparison with

Latinos and Whites.

Significance and Neglect of Black History

Strategy number two was to explore historical facts and data as it related to

African American contributions in the formation and building of the United States of

America. In this strategy, a documentary film based on the book, *Return to Glory* [90] was

shown at UCBC. The film was watched by program participants of the feeding program,

as well as young and old parishioners of the church.

The beginning of the film showed an older black male handing a younger black

male a book with information containing the historical contributions of Blacks. One

claim of the documentary was that the educational, economic and social systems of the

western world have succeeded in promoting a distorted image of black men.

Some aspects of the film included the Afrocentric appearance of the Egyptian

sphinx, along with other structures in Egypt which historians attributed to design and

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[89] New York Civil Liberties Union, "Latest Data: Stop-and-Frisk and Crime Both Lowest in Years," http://www.nyclu.org/news/latest-data-stop-and-frisk-and-crime-both-lowest-years (accessed November 14, 2016).

[90] Joel A. Freeman and Don B. Griffin, *Return to Glory: The Powerful Stirring of the Black Man*, DVD, dir. Stephen D. Alston (Severn, MD: The Freeman Foundation, 2003).

construction by Africans. In modern history, the Japanese attempted to reconstruct an African pyramid, which was a failure. The appearance of many ancient Egyptian sculptures resembled black Africans in appearance before their noses were destroyed by French soldiers in the 1700s during the French invasion of Egypt.

The film explored ancient civilization and its beginnings in Africa, and the role of the black race. This claim of African beginnings was substantiated with scientific analysis. Some religious historians used passages in the Bible to support myths that Blacks are a cursed race, based on the 10th chapter of Genesis. However, if the black race and the origin of humanity is linked to the black race than all of humanity was cursed. Further, the biblical text stated that when God created man, God said His creation was good.

The documentary used numerous biblical texts in relation to historical civilizations and the roles of Blacks as leaders in the development of humanity. The atrocious act of slavery in history was a major downfall for Blacks from its heights in the 25th dynasty of world dominance. The 18th century scholar Count Constantine de Volney noted that modern black men who were slaves and objects of scorn are from the "very race to which contemporaries owe arts, sciences, and even the use of speech."[91] To have justification for the economic engine of the slave trade, there had to be an accepted denigration of Blacks. This distortion was successful by the doctrine that Blacks were subhuman.

This subhuman doctrine was essentially a cover-up to hide the historical significance of the black race. The notion of historical distortion of black contributions

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[91] M. Constantine de Volney, *Travels through Syria and Egypt in the Years 1783, 1784, and 1785* (London: 1787), 80-83.

from early history was written about by historian Chancellor Williams.[92] For

contemporary Blacks, this distortion has successfully resulted in a loss of identity from

their historical origins.

In spite of historical distortion, many Blacks persevered, making social

contributions in the United States. Some notable names used in the documentary were

abolitionist Frederick Douglas, agriculturalist George Washington Carver, polar explorer

Matthew Henson, and civil rights activist Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Many of the contributions by Blacks are now incorporated into our western way

of life which we now take for granted. Some modern inventions by Blacks were the street

sweeping machine by Charles Brooks, and refrigerated trailer trucks by Frederick Jones,

whose invention was used for temperature control in airplanes and trains. Traffic signals

were created by Garret Morgan, who also invented the gas mask which saved many lives

during wars.

Henrietta Bradbury, a black woman created the underwater cannon whose

invention made it possible to launch torpedoes from submarines. Madam C. J. Walker

was a cosmetologist who also became the first woman of any race in the United States to

become a self-made millionaire. Daniel Hale Williams performed the first successful

open heart surgery which became a blueprint for performing this procedure, resulting in

the saving of many lives.

Lewis Latimer was the right hand man of Thomas Edison who invented the

filament that made light bulbs operable for more than giving momentary light. He also

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[92] Chancellor Williams, *Destruction of Black Civilization: Great Issues of a Race from 4500 B.C to 2000 A.D* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1987).

invented the electric lamp and pioneered incandescent and florescent lights, as well as diagrammed the telephone for Alexander Graham Bell. Elijah McCoy created the automatic lubrication system for locomotive engines along with many other inventions. In fact, the phrase, "Is that a real McCoy" derived from his inventions because his list of inventions was impressive. These are some notable people and their inventions which we now take for granted. Yet many people, especially Blacks do not know that these inventors were Black.

The documentary used historical hereditary significance of Blacks, and gave contemporary contributions of Blacks to society. This was done in dialogue with biblical texts to give meaning to Blacks, and to remind or inform them of the greatness of black history. In fact, some Afrocentric historians claimed that contemporary intellectual historians are too accustomed to the premise that whatever Africans learned, it was learned from Europe.

The textual trajectory of seminal Neoplatonism is irrefutably from Africa to Europe. Modern corrective African scholars are now redefining this trajectory based on textual and factual evidence.[93] The documentary showed that no race has a monopoly on intelligence, enterprise or genius. Humanity and contributions to the betterment of humanity is needed, and contemporary Blacks need to be a part of the process of making humanity better.

After the documentary was watched, the film observers (FO) engaged in a dialogue on its content and with respect to how they believed it currently impacted black

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[93] Thomas C. Oden, *How Africa Shaped The Christian Mind: Rediscovering the African Seedbed of Western Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2007), 42-61.

men. A black male which I will identify as FO (1) stated that he believed that contemporary black men were being taken back to the days of slavery by the use of the criminal justice system. FO (1) claimed that after the Emancipation Proclamation, Blacks were supposed to be given an opportunity to prosper, and there were some public provisions which gave venues to opportunity.

FO (1) further stated that after a measure of freedom was allowed to Blacks they quickly forgot past struggles they endured in slavery and lost their identity. As a result of losing their identity and heritage of greatness, Blacks were not taking advantage of opportunities availed to them in current society, and are subpar in areas such as education and have also become complacent with inferiority.

The response by FO (1) caused a brief moment of conversation with expressions of approval from his observation, but FO (1) did not discuss why he stated that the criminal justice system was being used to return Blacks into slavery. However, there is validity to his statement that opportunities were afforded to Blacks. After the Emancipation Proclamation, President Abraham Lincoln ordered 20,000 acres of land confiscated in South Carolina to be sold to former slaves. Then in January 1865, General William T. Sherman met with a group of African American leaders in Georgia. These leaders told Sherman that land ownership was the most ideal way for Blacks to secure and enjoy their newfound freedom.

Later in that month Sherman signed a legal writ, "Field Order No. 15," which was commonly referred to as, "40 acres and a mule." This order was expanded to encompass 40,000 former slaves to occupy 400,000 acres of land in South Carolina and Georgia. Federally owned mules were loaned to the former slaves to cultivate their properties. Less

than a year after Field Order No. 15 was signed by Sherman, President Lincoln was assassinated and Andrew Johnson became the president. [94]

President Johnson ordered that confiscated land given to former slaves be returned to the former white owners, dispossessing the new black land owners. Approximately 2,000 Blacks were able to retain the land acquired and worked on after the enactment of Field Order No. 15. The enforcement of laws such as the Southern Homestead Act and the creation of Black Codes were then put into effect. These laws successfully limited and restricted land ownership by Blacks, and relegated Blacks to being laborers in the American economy.

This reversal by President Johnson eliminated an extraordinary opportunity for Blacks to be a part of the political system in the south, which could have enabled them to achieve social identity as productive partners in economic and agricultural endeavors in the country. Poverty ravaged Blacks after the Civil War and Jim Crow laws reinforced economic enslavement. [95]

FO (2), another black man, stated that contemporary Blacks are suffering the divisive effects of a plan by a slave owner from the British West Indies by the name of Willie Lynch. Lynch orchestrated a plan of pitting Blacks against each other based on differences to create distrust and disunity among Blacks. FO (2) stated that contemporary Blacks were partly responsible for their current plight. He said that although teenager

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[94] Devon McCurdy, "Forty Acres and a Mule," Blackpast.org, http://www.blackpast.org/aah/forty-acres-and-mule (accessed November 4, 2016).

[95] Carter Godwin Woodson, *The Mis-Education of the Negro* (New York: Tribeca Books, 2013), 13-16.

Trevon Martin was killed by white neighborhood patrolman George Zimmerman in Florida, Blacks kill each other at a higher percentage rate than Whites kill Blacks.

FO (2) stated that Willie Lynch had a terrific plan for his agenda, because the effects of his plan are still at work. FO (2) said it took him 50 years to figure out the first rule of warfare was to divide in order to conquer. He claimed that if the plan of division failed, then the quest to conquer would also fail.

FO (3), another black man wanted to be heard. He stated that the social construct of the United States makes higher learning difficult to obtain for people of color. He stated that not very long ago, Blacks were lynched if they were caught in possession of a book. FO (3) said that Blacks were more interested in driving BMW cars and getting gold teeth than anything else, and they have forgotten their history. He claimed that the historical institutionalization of Blacks in the United Stated will be difficult to overcome. FO (3) said that other racial groups did not have to endure the many challenges in the country that Blacks had to endure.

The responses from the film observers were lively and engaging. There seemed to be a common theme of Blacks taking some ownership for their contemporary social plight. The group agreed there were frequently more responses to justice when Blacks were killed by Whites instead of by other Blacks. Black parents were not as active in their children's schools, working in partnership with their teachers in education.

There were also claims of skewed media coverage on crimes, as black victims received less coverage than white victims nationally. Blacks seemed more consumed with

how they were treated by Whites instead of how Blacks treated other Blacks.[96] Sadly, too many black youths have been following the cycle of subliminal societal progress, which will ultimately relegate them to mediocrity or as a part of the criminal justice system.

Law Enforcement Interaction

Strategy three was to explore public and private cases and incidents of community members who have committed transgressions, or been victimized by other members of the black community. An open discussion was conducted at UCBC with members of the community who were willing to share their personal experiences.

A black man whom I will call Sean stated that he was an offender and he did crimes with weapons. Sean stated that he kept in the company of other criminals, and did seven years in prison after he was arrested with a firearm. Sean did not disclose the details of his criminal activities, but expressed regret of his criminal past, because the result of his actions negatively impacted him in the present.

Another black man, who I will call "T," stated he had been in and out of the prison system. T stated that when Blacks go to jail and are released, society expects them to repay for their transgressions. T said he did crimes because he was in need. T claimed that he could have gone to school and done the things that society expected him to do, but he chose to engage in criminality. T stated that he has no one to blame for his criminal past but himself. He stated he committed a homicide and is known by the police, and was constantly stopped for questioning.

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[96] Tom Burrell, *Brainwashed: Challenging the Myth of Black Inferiority* (New York: NY, Smiley Books, 2010), 87-106.

T stated that Blacks will either conform to society, or they will not conform. He said he has observed unity in the Latino and Jewish communities, but there is no unity in Black communities. He felt that no one cared about him, so he should not care about anyone else. T said that when other Blacks saw him stopped by the police, he felt that there was an assumption that he was guilty of a crime, even when he was innocent.

Another black man that I will call "NY" said that he went to visit a friend and was leaving the building in which his friend lived. NY stated that when the elevator he was in stopped at a floor while it was going down, a black female saw him when the elevator doors opened, and did not enter. NY went to the lobby of the building and waited for the woman to come down. NY said he told the woman that if he was White, she would have entered the elevator with him, but because he was Black she did not. NY stated that Blacks discriminate against other Blacks.

Motivation and Challenge

Research question number two was, "What are the lessons in the Bible regarding responsibility to and for those who need forgiveness, justice and reconciliation?" In exploring this research question, biblical text will be used in dialogue with reconciliatory acceptance and mutual understanding of the other. The requirement of this approach entails giving the other the space to express interpretation of meaning from their perspective, as well as allowing the other to explain their location within their interpretive meaning. In this research question I will theorize on the question of how texts are read.

The insight of Ferdinand de Saussure's linguistics is "that meaning is constructed through linguistic opposition rather than through absolute reference." [97] This is the

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[97] de Saussure, 717-726.

realization of language in discourse. Texts are therefore in the same position as speech with respect to language in meaning. Further, it is psychologically and sociologically noted as a significant practice that writing is subsequent to speech. However, in the process of writing, the writing replaces speech where speech could have occurred. This suggests that texts are not completely restricted to subsequence of transcribing dictated speech when inscription is directed towards the meaning of the discourse. The relation between the meaning of speech and writing can be supported by reflecting on the function of reading in relation to writing. The nexus of reading in relation to writing must go through the process of interpretation.[98]

Dialogue entails an exchange of questions and answers, which is generally absent between writers and readers of texts. As the writer of texts does not respond to readers, a book essentially separates the acts of writing and reading into two sides, between which there is no direct communication. Instances when a reader encounters the writer, the opportunity for dialogue to occur could happen, and the disruption of isolated communication between the writer and the reader occurs.[99]

However if the author is dead the author cannot respond, and dialogue is not possible. When this occurs the reader has the task of interpretation through their understanding of text. While Friedrich Schleiermacher is considered by many to be the father of modern hermeneutics, his work on hermeneutics as an art of understanding heavily considered speech in the realm of understanding.[100]

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[98] Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics & the Human Scien*ces, trans. and ed. John B. Thompson (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2006), 145-164.

[99] Ibid.

[100] Alexander S. Jensen, *Theological Hermeneutics* (London: SCM Press, 2007), 90-102.

Wilhem Dilthey approached understanding through the perception of understanding as a process by which individuals come to know something by mental cognition through perceptible signs in which it manifests.[101] This approach is more in line with the theology of St. Augustine in regard to signs, symbols, and things which give meaning. Origen was not widely noted for his exegetical interpretation of text to give literal meaning; he was famous for his extensive use of allegorical interpretation and its application to the New Testament.[102]

Biblical and Textual Reading

How texts are read is subject to the interaction between the author and the reader. This interaction is informed by the external life and inner development of the author, which is referred to as psychological interpretation, [103] and what I believe to be the social and psychological location of the reader. It is impossible to withdraw all of our past experiences and learnings when we read texts. We therefore bring our assumptions and biases into the realm of understanding and interpretation of the texts we read. How texts are read is therefore subject to who is reading the text.

Regarding reconciliation, I will reference the biblical pericope of the Prodigal Son from Luke 15:11-32. The prodigal son gives the reader the opportunity to read the text from various perspectives. However, from the name given to the pericope, "The Prodigal Son," or "The Lost Son," it is clear that significant attention in the text should be directed towards the actions of the son.

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[101] Ricoeur, 150.

[102] Jensen, 27-28.

[103] Ibid., 94.

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The son was gainfully employed in the successful family business of his father. In fact, tradition in the historical context of the passage dictates that the son was to be minority owner of the business, and his older brother was to be the majority owner. The son, wanting to enjoy the portion of his inheritance, petitions the father for his share of wealth prematurely. The request was unorthodox, because the father was still alive.

Nevertheless, the father complied and divided the inheritance between the brothers and gave the portion allotted to the prodigal son to him to do with as he wished. Shortly after receiving his portion of wealth, the son decided to leave the employment of the family business. The son did not start his own business or invest his wealth. He left the disciplined practice of running the family business to relocate to a place where he could indulge himself with pleasures of a man who is wealthy and unrestrained.

The wealth of the son was quickly depleted because of the lifestyle which he chose. Being without money and away from home, the son experienced difficulties with survival and had to seek employment. Work was scarce, so he had to take a job which was not only forbidden in his religion and culture, but was a job that led him to detestable acts in order to survive.

A pivotal point in the pericope occurs when the son comes to a realization that the conditions in which he is living is far worse than anything he would experience working in the family business. In fact, the menial workers in the family business lived much better than he was living. The son decided to travel back home and seek forgiveness from his father for poor judgment and stewardship of the portion of inheritance which was allotted to him.

When the son was approaching the estate of his father, the father saw him approaching from a distance and ran to greet him. The father then embraced his son and was compassionate to him. The father's compassion led him to restore his son, not only by allowing him back home, but with the privileges of sonship.[104] The father held a celebratory feast of the return of his son, because he considered him lost, but his son returned home.

The older brother was angered by the celebration, and refused to attend. He expressed his anger to his father by telling him that he had always done the proper things expected of him and worked hard building the family business, and his younger brother was unworthy of a celebration. The father told the older brother that the entire family business would go to him, but his younger brother, considered to be dead, has come back to life.

This text can be read from various perspectives. It can be read through the lens of the father, the older brother, even of one of the menial workers. Nevertheless the focus on the decisions and actions of the son, the plight he experienced, and the reconciliatory position of the father are difficult to dismiss.

This pericope gives a lesson of reconciliation and forgiveness to those that have made poor decisions and experienced undesired effects from the decisions they made. When forgiveness is sought by those who have committed transgressions and acts contrary to good judgment, the prospect of forgiveness and reconciliation should not be severed as a practice. The authenticity of regret and the sincerity of restorative relations

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[104] Henry Scawen Plumptre, *Lectures On The Parable Of The Prodigal Son* (London: J. Hatchard and Son, 1833), 175.

should be assessed. Those in positions to aid in restoration should employ every method possible to lead those seeking restoration to productive lives. This approach should be incumbent upon the Church.

The reality is that not everyone will be willing to reconcile or forgive. The older brother of the prodigal son was unforgiving, angered by the celebration of his brother's return. Victims of transgressions and those adversely impacted may never offer venues of restoration that may be contrary to their sense of justice. The alternative to reconciliation and restoration of black men attempting reintegration from the prison system may be recidivism.

Incarceration and Social and Cultural Norms

Strategy number one was to conduct a group study session with congregants and community members on black male incarceration causes and its effects upon their communities and families. An open dialogue discussion was held at UCBC. The session was attended by males and females. Conversations were guided by a willingness to share personal experiences on the part of those participating in the discussion.

A black woman that I will call Joyce wanted to be heard. She said that she was 64 years old and retired from the state. Joyce stated that many Blacks in the community are being priced out of their apartments and have been forced to live on the streets. She claimed that this prospect leads individuals to resort to criminal activity in order to avoid homelessness.

In fact homelessness has reached the highest levels in New York City since the Great Depression of the 1930s. In October of 2016, 62,306 homeless people were reported to dwell in the City. The municipal homeless shelter occupancy rate was 83 percent higher than 10 years ago. African Americans and Latinos are disproportionately

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impacted by homelessness with 58 percent of the homeless being African American 31

percent Latino, 7 percent White, and 4 percent of another race or ethnicity.[105]

A male black that I will call Andrew stated that Blacks comprised 13 percent of

the population, and there is no political strength in the black community. There was a

consensus by the groups that Blacks do not vote in public elections. An example was

brought up about the Stand Your Ground law in Florida that was the justification used to

acquit George Zimmerman in the Trevon Martin case.

The group discussed economic disenfranchisement within the black community.

There were charges of Koreans selling West Indian products in a predominately West

Indian neighborhood, and Chinese selling southern style fried chicken. There was an

agreement of disunity and distrust among Blacks, which was a stumbling block that

Blacks cannot pass over on the quest for prosperity.

Joyce stated that alcohol is another reason for the demise of the black community,

but many communities are impacted by alcohol. She said alcoholism is a unique problem

because alcohol is legal. Joyce stated that she went through her years of schooling as a

young alcoholic, and battled alcoholism for years. She said that alcohol became a

problem for her because of how she was raised.

Joyce stated that she grew up in a family of functional alcoholics. She said that

there needs to be a focus on the younger generation so they would not fall into

alcoholism. A black male chimed in and stated that alcoholism was not the problem in his

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[105] Coalition for the Homeless, "New York City Homelessness: The Basic Facts,"
http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/NYCHomelessnessFactSheet_10-2016_citations.pdf (accessed January 03, 2017).

house, and said his father was a cocaine fiend, and alcohol and substance abuse became a part of the black culture.

A black male stated that there is an abundance of crime in the black community because Blacks are in positions where they have to constantly struggle. This prevents Blacks from having the luxury of doing things which will edify their individual interests, causing frustration and anger to build up with community members. The issue of teenage pregnancy in the black community also came up in discussion.

A black man stated that he picked up the habits of alcohol and cocaine abuse from his young parents. He stated that it was the environment he was raised in that caused him to be in the prison system. He stated that young parents were not equipped to properly raise children, and the children eventually join gangs, which results in their being negatively impacted by the criminal justice system. It was said that parents need to be parents more than friends of their children.

Another black said that he had the problem of his daughters disrespecting their mother because she wanted to be their friend instead of a parent. He stated that she has lost control of his daughters which has resulted in him being a disciplinarian, feeling like he is a single parent raising daughters. He said his daughters were in their twenties, and his eldest daughter had her first child when she was seventeen.

Confronting Failure

Strategy number two was to conduct a workshop on confronting failures. The reality is everyone will experience failure in some form in their lifetime. The response to failure will determine the probabilities of future successes. Failure response methodologies are needed to adequately assess possible reasons for failures, so modifications can be made to future undertakings.

I was invited to facilitate a workshop on failure for men during a Men's Season conference. The church was The Greater Allen A.M.E. Cathedral of New York which is located in Jamaica, NY. Floyd H. Flake and M. Elaine Flake are co-pastors. The workshop was conducted at the Pine Grove Retreat Center in Wall Township, NJ. The workshop was attended by approximately twenty-five black men, and Pastor Floyd Flake was also present for the duration. Pastor Flake is an ex-congressman who also has vast experience in education and ministry. His church is also one of the largest and most progressive in the United States.

I began the workshop by defining failure. The definition I gave was, "the state or fact of being lacking or insufficient; a losing of power or strength; not doing; neglect or omission; not succeeding in doing or becoming; a person who does not succeed." I asked the group that if there was anyone present who has never experienced failure as defined to raise their hand; and as expected there were no responders.

I then asked each attendee how they would define failure, and what stigma they believe was attached to failure. An overarching response was the inability to provide for oneself or family dependents, and becoming a liability to others. I told the group that in many instances failure begins as a state of mind. Even in areas where they may be noted as being competent or gifted, past achievements are used a ruler to measure current performances. A self-imposed raising of standards then gets set, which then applies self-imposed pressure to outdo what was previously done.

I illustrated on a line graph for the group a scale with two ends. On one end I wrote success, on the other I wrote failure. I explained that the success end represented aspects in which they were confident in their ability to handle tasks to satisfaction of self,

as well as by others. I explained that the failure end should not be viewed in an insulting manner; instead it represented aspects which further development is needed in order to meet satisfactory results.

On the scale between success and failure was a work-in-progress zone—an area which needed special attention—the area of focus which I wanted to spend the most time on. I asked the group what were some of the obstacles in that work zone area which they believed hindered them form moving closer towards the success side of the scale. Some of the responses were procrastination, insecurities, fear of failure, and past experiences which prevented them from moving forward.

The responses were mostly psychologically based reasons that prevented achieving success. The notion of being perceived as a failure or inadequate seemed to be a hindrance to success. The idea of being shamed or guilty because of failure was enough to immobilize motivation to work through difficulties. Guilt has to do with behavior, which is an act of omission and commission which is considered to be bad or wrong for which we can apologize or atone. However shame is an intense emotion which has further reaching immobilizing effects, which will not only cease progress but can actually result in regression or reversal of progress.[106]

One great hindrance, particularly among black men, is the unwillingness to seek out help when it is needed. Often men are unwilling to ask for help out of the fear of being viewed as weak or vulnerable. This flaw is an aspect which cripples the prospects of success. There will be times when men may need to reach out or consult someone who

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[106] Petruska Clarkson, *The Achilles Syndrome: Overcoming the Secret Fear of Failure* (Boston: Element Books, 1998), 1-31.

has the ability to aid them in their undertakings. Some attribute this flaw as a culturally learned aspect of male identity.

I challenged the men to list and prioritize some aspects of specific areas in their lives which they felt they were more towards the failure end of the scale. I then asked them what were their concerns with working through difficulties, and what would they consider to be good enough for them to consider the respective undertakings to be a success.

The responses were broad because of the many different locations in life of men in the group. The dialogue was engaging, and the men communicated among themselves with their own ideas and perspectives. I then gave the group some possible hindrances to consider in their undertakings. They were being too concerned with what others may think of their ability, being overcome by feelings of anxiety by setting unrealistic goals, becoming fatigued or burning themselves out because of wanting instant results, and the unwillingness to reach out for help when it is needed.

The issue of competition and the need to be successful in the workplace came up. The group contended that no one wants to be perceived as a failure in the workplace, and often office politics plays a role in that perception. I agreed that no one should want to be viewed as a failure in their workplace. In corporate America, there are many employers who show little or no appreciation for their worker. Having job security is important, and many people, men and women, will tolerate undesirable treatment and work conditions in order to keep their jobs so they can meet their obligations.

In these situations, the feelings of anger, bitterness and unfulfillment with work can produce feelings of failure. The two most basic psychological needs of people are to

work and to love.[107] I explained how I viewed the first two chapters of Genesis in the creation stories as representing work and love. While I did not discuss love further, I told the group that work is important because everyone needs to feel useful on some level, and to be able to contribute to a cause to give validation to their worth and esteem.

If there are overwhelming feelings of anger and lack of fulfillment with work, I suggested that opportunities to do volunteer work, or some other activity which gives some feelings of satisfaction should be explored. This was because those negative feelings are unhealthy and have the potential to negatively impact other aspects of their lives. Everyone wants to experience feelings of success and be prosperous. However, prosperity itself is difficult to define.

I explained to the group that money is the motivation for many of our actions, and having money is better than being without money, but money does not necessarily bring joy, and the realities of life can make money less important. Therefore, money should not always be the primary reason that defines our actions.[108]

Courageous

Strategy number three was to present and discuss a contemporary movie in dialogue with the Bible. The purpose of the movie was to engage the Bible and biblical principles or lessons in concert with a cinematic experience to depict life experiences and possible ways the Bible could inform actions. The movie was shown at UCBC and was observed by members and non-members of the church. The movie was observed by male and female viewers, although the majority of the attendees were male. While there are

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[107] Ibid., 72-84.

[108] Steve Young, *Great Failures of the Extremely Successful: Mistakes, Adversity, Failure and Other Steppingstones to Success* (Los Angeles: Tallfellow Press, 2002), 96-100.

entertainment factors in watching movies, my purpose was to illuminate situations, decisions, and possible lessons which may be valuable for future choice considerations.

The movie, *Courageous*,[109] chronicled the professional and personal lives of four male police officers, three of which were White and one was Black. There was a theme of balancing the stress and demands of work obligations and maintaining a healthy family relationship from a fatherhood perspective. One officer was divorced and experiencing financial problems. Two of them were experiencing challenges with young teens, and the forth was single and struggling to figure how to reconcile with fathering a daughter with whom he had no interaction since his child was born. This officer also detached himself from the mother of his child, and did not give any form of support to either of them.

Between them they experienced the loss of a child because of a drunk driver (a daughter that was being courted by and attracted to an older gang member), corruption by one of them by stealing drug evidence, and the unwillingness to forgive a deceased father: dealing with abandonment and the challenges as a youth without his father's guidance.

There was also a notion of having faith and belief in God throughout the movie, particularly with two of the four officers. A focus was on not simply being a father or manhood, but for fathers to be intentional with being meaningful and productive in the upbringing of their children in order to positively influence their lives. There was also an agreement between them that there was to be accountability between them to reinforce a resolution which they all subscribed to that gave guidelines with respect God and family.

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[109] Alex Kendrick and Stephen Kendrick, *Courageous*, DVD, directed by Alex Kendrick (Los Angeles: Sony Pictures, 2012).

After the movie concluded, I urged the viewers to share their perspectives of the movie with regard to justice, reconciliation, perseverance and forgiveness. The first one that wanted to be heard was a black male that I will call Movie Observer 1 (MO1). MO1 stated that he always had negative interaction with the police, and never considered them to be personable and people that experience family challenges and difficulties that everyone else experiences.

MO1 said that the officer who was stealing drugs because he was having financial problems was an aspect in the movie that seemed very real to him. He said that he always had a distrust of the police, and he understood that the officer was stealing to survive because he was financially ruined after his divorce. However, because the officer was arresting people for selling drugs on the street, while stealing drugs to sell for himself, it was a double standard. MO1 stated that when the corrupt police officer got caught and was arrested—to him that was justice.

MO2 then said that the only reason why the corrupt police officer was caught was because his partner who was also his friend in the movie turned him in. He then stated that in that situation, he didn't know if he would have been able to turn in his friend. MO2, who was a black man, said that after the police officer was arrested, his police officer friend who turned him in went to see him in jail, and they were able to have a civil conversation. The corrupt police officer knew what he was doing was wrong and wasn't bitter at his friend for turning him in. He even asked his police friend who turned him in to look out for his son while he was in prison.

This response caused a brief moment of chatter among the group with some agreeing and others disagreeing with the officer who turned in his friend. I then told the

group that the officer that was stealing drugs was fully aware of the consequences of his actions, especially as a law enforcement officer. His decision to steal was intentional, and he had no one to blame for getting arrested but himself. He could have made a choice to supplement his income by getting a second job, but he chose to steal from drug dealers instead. I also said that not only did he break the law when he was supposed to be upholding and enforcing the law, but he also violated the trust of his colleagues and friends.

MO3, a black woman, stated that although what the officer was doing was illegal and he deserved to go to jail, the young officer who fathered a child and did not support his daughter or his daughter's mother was worse. She stated that the officer had a secure job and should have been giving financial support to help with his daughter. MO3 said that it did not matter if the officer did not want the child and told the mother to abort the pregnancy; she had the child so the officer should have been responsible for supporting the child. There were strong responses of approval of the statement by MO3 by the women in the room, as well as some head nodding of approval by some of the men.

I then brought up the fact that the young officer attempted to reconcile with his daughter and the mother of his daughter for abandoning them. He could not change the decisions he made in the past, but he was attempting to make amends for his abandonment and be a positive influence in the life of his daughter moving forward. I then asked if the young officer's attempt of reconciliation should be received. There were responses of yes and no by the women observers, and an overwhelming yes by the male observers. I then asked some with different opinions the reason for their decision.

MO4 who was a black woman stated that he had no contact with his daughter or his daughters' mother since the baby was born, and he should have no right to suddenly want to be a part of their lives because suddenly he feels like it. MO5 who was a male black then stated that at least the officer was trying to reconcile. He stated that one of the problems is that some women are so angry and vindictive, they will use a man's child to get back at them even when they are trying to help and the child would benefit. MO5 also said that in the letter he wrote to his daughter's mother expressing regret for his actions, he enclosed a check for $500, and that should mean something.

After a brief moment of chatter by the group, I asked if it was better if the young officer should have attempted to reconcile for abandoning the mother and child, or should have kept on living as if they do not exist. Unanimously, the group agreed that it was better that the young offer attempted reconciliation. I then asked what they believe stoked the consciousness of the young officer to want to reconcile, and the group agreed that it was being in the company of more experienced officers who had Christian values and went to church.

I then discussed the importance of the type of people we associate with and how the type of decisions they make can have some form of influence over our own actions. I then briefly discussed the pericope of the Prodigal Son and how seeking forgiveness and reconciliation can change lives. I then brought up the black officer in the film who did not know his father, because his father was reckless in fathering children and had nothing to do with him once he was born.

MO7 who was a black male stated that he could relate to the black officer's situation, because his father ran the streets and was killed when he was small and he does

not remember him. I asked MO7 how did that affect him growing up, and he replied that

he ran the streets as well, which resulted in him having problems with law enforcement. I

stated that in the movie, the black cop was also subject to gang activity and criminal

influences, but a man decided to mentor him as a youth which ultimately led him to being

a police officer. MO7 stated he had no one like that growing up. I suggested that he

should be that someone to an at-risk youth like he was, because it may save their life.

Lastly I asked the group their opinion of the officer who lost his daughter to a

drunk driver. The group concurred that they would not forgive the drunk driver that killed

the little girl. I conceded that in the movie there was not a scene where the police officer

forgave the drunk that killed his daughter. However, the loss of his daughter caused the

police officer to have a closer relationship with his son.

I then asked the group how they believed that the police officer was able to

continue functioning after his devastating loss, and unanimously the group agreed that his

pastor and friends helped. I told the group that when the officer was attempting to cope

with the loss of his daughter, he sought help from his pastor. With the help of his pastor,

his faith in God, along with the support of his friends and family he was able to persevere

with the reality that his daughter was deceased. There were other decisions that this

police officer could have made, including seeking revenge in some form. However, God,

faith, and Christian values helped this officer to heal from his loss.

Reintegration in the Community

Research question number three was how can we build and incorporate black men

who have been negatively impacted by the criminal justice system back into the

community and church? Regarding black men and the criminal justice system, I have

attempted to describe the social construct, including some historical perspectives that

inform the current state of contemporary black men. In this research question I will

theorize on how meaning is mediated, and how life change is nurtured for black men.

First, I will summarize my assessment of the current state of black men and the

criminal justice system from a Biblical Engagement perspective, in what I will call a

situational analysis of the black plight.

From the viewpoint of a professional biblical scholar, the Bible is one text among

many other texts to which scholars bring their interpretive interests and practices to

bear.[110] However for Christians involved in the praxis of Christian ministry, the Bible is

the inherent word of God which speaks to the existence and purpose of being, and

operates as a deontological transforming text which brings us into relation with God.

While discussions about metaphysics[111] and the like may be intriguing to some, it

does not speak to the realities of urban enclaves. Further, existential interpretation of

biblical text which juxtaposes mythology and existence[112] is essentially devoid of value in

dealing with the socioeconomic plight of black communities. Biblical Engagement brings

to light formations and differences of national identities, ethnicities, and race. It also

deconstructs colonial intentions hidden behind Western biblical interpretation.[113]

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[110] Stephen E. Fowl, *Engaging Scripture: Challenges in Contemporary Theology* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), 1-31.

[111] Simon Critchley, *Continental Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 90-110.

[112] Brian K. Blount, *Cultural Interpretation: Reorienting New Testament Criticism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 27-39.

[113] R. S. Sugirtharajah, *Voices From the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006), 64-82.

Race prejudice, historically seeded in friction between different groups of people, may also entail differences in aim and ideals of different races.[114] These differences formulate different classes. Classes are essentially conflict groups derived out of authoritative structures of imperatively coordinated associations.[115] This formulation of classes informs alterity. Alterity is essentially what led to one of the worst violations and disrespect in humanity, which is slavery. The physical and psychological abuse of slavery destroyed the self-confidence, self-respect, and dignity of Blacks for generations.[116]

Slavery, coupled with oppressive laws and an unfair criminal justice system successfully deprived and depressed the black community. The depressed state of black urban communities depicts a compound-complex system which yields empirical data of marginalization. So much so, that for some, being oppressed has encroached upon their hope. To mediate the collapse of meaning, identity, and self-worth, coordinated and sustaining intervention is needed.[117]

Racism is elastic and has morphed over time to reshape itself to the contemporary zeitgeist of political and economic elitism resulting in black men being marginalized and subject to mass incarceration by the criminal justice system.[118] A new paradigm of necessary mitigation needs to be in the forefront of awareness in the black psyche, of which, the Church should be an effective vehicle.

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[114] Kivisto, 134-138.

[115] Ibid., 226-232.

[116] Ibid., 437-441.

[117] Cornel West, *Race Matters* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), 11-20.

[118] Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2012), 20-59.

Historically, the Church has been an institution where Blacks can go collectively to assess challenges they faced as a people in order to formulate appropriate responses. The Church still bears responsibility to mediate challenges within communities, and should operate as a transforming agent to nurture positive change. Frustrations of feeling powerless and being targeted by law enforcement were an expressed sentiment by members of the community. I attempted to mediate some of the expressed sentiments.

Police Encounters

Strategy number one was to conduct a forum on police encounters to inform and educate participants of appropriate actions and conduct when they have an encounter with the police. The forum was held at UCBC and members of the church and community were in attendance. Members of the site team possessed extensive experience in law enforcement, including one which was a practicing lawyer. A representative from the Community Affairs Bureau of the NYPD also attended to help facilitate the forum. The forum was attended by male and female attendees, all of which were black.

Some of the topics that were proposed to the attendees were: what to expect when you have an encounter with the police, what are the proper actions that should be taken by the police, why you may feel targeted while driving, what are your rights when you are stopped by the police, what actions increases and decreases the risks of arrest or other enforcement action when you are stopped, are police body cameras a good idea, what is community policing, and cases for and against stop, question and frisk. Responses from the facilitator(s) will be referred to as "the panel' and others present at the forum will be referred to as "attendee".

After the panel introduced themselves, the question of what a motorist should expect when stopped by the police was presented. The panel stated that expectations

when you are stopped by the police can vary depending upon the facts and circumstances around why the police stopped you. The motorist being stopped may or may not be aware of the facts and circumstances. An example was given that if someone was wanted for a violent crime and was driving a vehicle which matched the vehicle that an innocent person was driving, the police might stop the vehicle being driven by the innocent person in an aggressive manner believing the occupant(s) to be involved in the violent crime.

In situations like this, the panel stated the officer(s) stopping the vehicle will be focused on the safety of the public, and the apprehension of the individual(s) wanted for the crime. Depending on the circumstances of the incident, the officer(s) should de-escalate the intensity of the stop once it is determined that the vehicle occupant(s) were not being sought for any crime. The panel also stated that the experience of being stopped by the police under a circumstance such as the given example should be different from being stopped for a minor infraction such as a broken tail light.

The panel then asked the attendees if they believed a police officer was required to tell a motorist the reason why they were being stopped. The attendees unanimously agreed that a police officer was required to tell the reason for the stop once they and the motorist are engaged. The panel then informed the attendees that a police officer does not have to inform a motorist why they stopped them. There was a consorted response of disbelief by the attendees.

The panel stated that an officer may ask a stopped motorist to present their driver's license, registration, and insurance card without explaining the reason for stopping them. The panel said the reason for not giving an explanation could vary from a license plate reader on a police vehicle indicating that the vehicle was uninsured, which

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may be unknown to the vehicle operator, to a moving violation which may also be unknown to the operator of the vehicle. In either event, the officer should properly identify the vehicle operator.

In the case of the former, it could have resulted from an incident such as a late payment an insurance company; in the case of the latter it could be that the officer needs to verify the validity of the driver's license of the vehicle operator, particularly if the registered owner of the vehicle reasonably appears to be different from the operator. In either case, the interaction could result anywhere from a warning from the officer, to having the vehicle towed, to an arrest.

Often the outcome of being legally stopped by the police has uncertain conclusions. The panel stated that if a police officer explains to a motorist that they were being stopped because of a moving violation, the motorist may disagree with the officer which could result in an escalated interaction. During a vehicle stop, a police officer may even tell a motorist to turn off and exit their vehicle. The panel urged the attendees to comply with these types of lawful requests by the police. Loud, boisterous and aggressive protests of lawful police actions by motorists are unproductive, and may escalate the police-civilian interaction to undesirable results.

Further, in police-civilian interactions in which the police have the ability to use discretion, hostile conduct on the part of the motorist increases the likelihood of being summonsed and or arrested instead of being verbally warned. There was dissatisfaction among the attendees at this response from the panel. The panel told the attendees that the police are human and they are not always correct. However the time to debate and argue against the police and police actions was not in a street setting. In the street setting, a

police officer has tremendous leverage. Disagreements with police interactions should be remedied after the interaction has concluded.

The panel gave numerous examples of how they exercised discretion when they could have in fact taken enforcement action while in the performance of their duties. In policing, discretion is generally defined as the ability to choose among alternatives when making decisions. Discretionary decisions by police officers are viewed as an area of unregulated decision-making that with proper training and experience allows officers to exercise thoughtful application of decisions in which they are not legally or procedurally bound by law or policy.[119]

The issue of body cameras being worn by police officers was then discussed. The panel agreed that body cameras are becoming more popular in policing and that it is a good practice. However, the panel said that police cameras may influence limitations on discretionary actions. In situations where police officers may exercise discretion, they may resort to enforcement because of the possibility of negative critique and or action for procedural guideline violations.

The panel also told the attendees that the use of body cameras will also record incidents where police officers act inappropriately or illegally. When police officers take enforcement action in performance of their duty, they are trained to use the minimal amount of force necessary to gain control of an incident.[120] This practice of the use of force is an area in policing that has been given increased attention because of highly publicized police enforcement incidents. The NYPD has also actively recruited to make

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[119] Michael A. Caldero and John P. Crank, *Police Ethics: The Corruption of Noble Cause,* 2nd ed. (Cincinnati, OH: Anderson Publishing, 2004), 67-71.

[120] John Kleinig, *The Ethics of Policing* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999), 96-123.

the overwhelmingly male, Caucasian department more diverse. The NYPD has also

increased the age and education requirements in order to be hired. One of the reasons is

the belief that the NYPD would have better quality police officers.

The attendees unanimously supported the idea of police officers wearing body

cameras. They stated that if the police officers are not doing anything wrong, then they

should not object to wearing body cameras. The attendees said that cell phone videos by

civilians captured police misconduct, and if the officers were wearing body cameras they

would be more conscious of their actions when they are dealing with the public.

An attendee brought up the issue of police profiling civilians. The panel

concurred that profiling is a reality which every police officer uses as an investigatory

tool in situation assessment coupled with their knowledge, experience, and familiarity of

the areas in which they police. The panel alluded to community policing, by which police

officers get to know the people and the dynamics of designated areas in which they are

assigned.

Because of their knowledge of the people and area of assignment, community

police officers may be able to detect abnormalities and crimes in their designated areas

when other police officers would not readily be able to notice anything nefarious. The

panel stated that this an example of how police officers should use profiling. An attendee

stated she wanted to know about the police officers that seem to pull people over for no

apparent reason and request to search your vehicle.

A panel member stated that he worked in Manhattan North with an officer that

profiled vehicles driven by Caucasians coming over the George Washington Bridge that

went into Washington Heights. This was a particular destination for individuals to

purchase narcotics. The panel member stated that the officer would stop these vehicles that go into known drug locations and threaten them with arrest. The officer would then request their identification and take their wallets and purses.

The officer would then remove currency and tell them that he would not arrest them but gave them a warning not to come back. The panel member stated that the officer was eventually terminated for stealing from drivers and tested positive for drug use. The panel member stated that there are some officers that do not abide by the law and use profiling for wrong and corrupt reasons. However, those types of officers are statistically few and need to be identified and held responsible for their actions. The attendees then reiterated that body cameras would help to prevent these types of actions by some police officers.

The issue of stop, question and frisk came into discussion. The panel stated that the number of stops and frisks by the police drastically decreased under the administration of Mayor Bill de Blasio. The majority of the attendees stated that they were pleased with this decrease because they viewed the stop and frisk policy of the police as an abuse of police authority upon the public. An attendee stated that because of the decreased stops and frisks by the police, more people were carrying guns and she hears more gun shots in the neighborhood.

A local newspaper reported that parents of a teenager praised the NYPD in an anonymous letter for their stop, question and frisk arrest of their son. The parents claimed that the arrest of their son saved his life and caused him to change for the better.[121] There

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[121] Graham Rayman, "Parents Praise NYPD for Stop-And-Frisk Arrest They Say Helped Fix Their Troubled Teen's Life," *New York Daily News*, January 16, 2017), http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/nypd-stop-frisk-helped-troubled-teen-improve-life-article-1.2947845 (accessed January 17, 2017).

were some attendees that concurred there were more guns being carried by criminals because of the decreased stops and frisks, but the majority were pleased that there was a decrease in the number of stops and frisks by the NYPD.

Community Informational Forum

Strategy number two was to conduct a workshop for disseminating information and skill building to participants. Strategy number three was to hold a communal celebration to affirm black men and the Church's commitment to join together in partnership. These two strategies were conducted in one event in order to bring individuals and representatives of public and private entities that provide outlets and resources to those negatively impacted by the criminal justice system. This forum was open to the public and any attendee, regardless of sex or race, and any who may benefit from the services provided by respective representatives were welcomed.

A public radio announcement was broadcast for several days on 1190 WLIB AM Radio for several days to advertise the event. Present at the forum were Nadia Sadloski who was the program director from The Doe Fund, representing Ready Willing and Able; John R. Chaney, JD, the executive director of ComAlert, from the office of the Brooklyn District Attorney; Revs. Andrea and Helen Broady, the founders of Genesis Transitional Housing; Rev. Dr. Alfonso Wyatt, founder of Strategic Destiny; and Andre Mitchell, the founder of Man Up! Inc.

Members of the site team represented perspectives from the NYC Police Department, NYC Department of Corrections, NYC Probation Department, NYC Sanitation Police, as well as legal counsel. Also present was Russell Carter; Community Outreach Specialist from Healthfirst Insurance of New York to discuss ways of obtaining health coverage.

This community forum and information session was attended by community members, as well as parishioners of the church. I will note some of the topics presented by some of the facilitators. The facilitators were experts in the areas which they represented. Nadia stated that the Doe fund strongly focuses on reintegration services for former inmates in their program which lasts for five to seven months. She said the Doe Fund employs male and female ex-convicts to clean public streets through their Ready, Willing, and Able program. They also have government contracts with organizations such as Housing Preservation and Development (HPD).

The Doe Fund offers housing and employment services, and aid to help sustain child support expenses of their participants. Nadia stated they also offer training programs that lead to certification in trade jobs such as boiler repairs, and in the culinary arts. They also offer assistance with obtaining driver's license, General Equivalency Diplomas (GED), and computer literacy classes. The Doe Fund has relationships with employers who employ graduates of the Doe Fund program.

Nadia stated that they work with Federal Parole and Probation Departments, and conduct drug tests twice a week on individuals in their program in partnership with them. The goal of the Doe Fund was to help their participants become integrated into mainstream society. After the presentation, there were questions from the attendees regarding the acceptance of program participants that are in methadone programs or on parole, as well as age requirement, and transportation expenses.

ComAlert provides core services to individuals returning from incarceration back into the Brooklyn community. Their primary focus is on reintegration. John gave some statistical data of inmates returning to communities and the need to provide services for

them. The District Attorney's office felt that there was also a need to engage them from a public safety perspective. John stated that the statistics of inmate reintegration and recidivism was the primary reason for the formation of ComAlert.

ComAlert also partners with the Doe Fund. Although they initially focused on inmates returning from prison into communities with substance abuse problems, John said it has since developed into a one-stop resource center for anyone coming home from prison. They offer substance abuse counseling, job development services, case management services, psychiatric services, job training programs, clothing assistance, Aids/HIV resources, as well as doctors and nurses to address medical screenings.

ComAlert employs former inmates that went through the ComAlert program and eventually became substance abuse counselors. They partner with other public entities as well as NYC Probation and Parole Departments to aid individuals in their program. John stated that they individualize their program based on each program participant. They also offer life skills development assistance to aid those attempting to reintegrate into the community.

John reiterated that the program has been very successful and has a proven record of success. The program has been validated by Harvard University, and has cut the recidivism rate by 50% compared with other programs with similar services. John stated it costs approximately $60,000 annually to keep an inmate in prison, and approximately $2,300 annually to rehabilitate. From the presentation, it was clear that the issue of reintegration verses recidivism was a social as well as an economic issue.

Andre stated that Genesis Transitional Housing provides six months of transitional housing for men and women reintegrating from prison back into society.

They facilitate spiritual mentorship with professional mentors who were part of the prison system to mentor those that come into their program. They also provide group and individual mentorship and attempt to forge a family type relationship in aiding to restore those that are reintegrating into communities

Genesis Transitional Housing also has substance abuse counselors to aid with those who are struggling with maintaining sobriety. Andre told the attendees that some of the individuals in their program would prefer to go back into the prison system rather than into public homeless shelters. He stated that the only exclusion to the program is that they do not accept sex offenders or arsonists. They also administer drug tests to their program participants and work with NYC Probation and Parole Departments for those in their program. Genesis Transitional Housing also seeks businesses that will partner with them to employ those that are a part of their program.

A site team member that is a probation officer stated that he has experienced a systemic issue in which he is simultaneously the parole officer for youth offenders and their parents. He stated that some children are on probation for serious crimes at very young ages. He said it was an alarming trend.

Attendees stated that the rules of the probation department are often too strict, and those that are on probation often fail to comply with the strict rules and are subject to being incarcerated. There were also concerns from the attendees regarding the juveniles that have criminal potential. ComAlert stated that there are government organizations that are actively attempting to mitigate the trend of youth in the criminal justice system to reintegrate them back into society. John stated that there was growing concern about youth becoming criminal justice recidivists.

An extended dialogue was held about youth becoming a part of the criminal justice system, and the need to mitigate their becoming career criminals. It was stated that there are efforts from organization such as Cross Roads, the Office of Juvenile Justice, and programs such as Back to Home to aid juveniles and their families.

A site team member then spoke from a NYC Department of Corrections perspective. He stated that corrections have no mechanisms to aid inmates with reintegration into communities. He described it as a farm system for individuals that have been arrested. He stated there are no positive venues or programs once they are incarcerated in the NYC Correctional System; and there are inmates who have been incarcerated for over two years while they wait for their case to be adjudicated.

He said that he has supervised inmates in the past whose children are now in the Correction System. He recognizes generational ties when their parents come to visit them on Rikers Island. He praised agencies such as the Doe Fund, Man Up! Inc, and others that attempt to mitigate recidivism. He stated that the Correction Department has no sustaining venues of intervention. He also stated that the Correction System does not invest in reintegration programs, recidivism prevention or social development mitigation. He also stated that the youth on Rikers Island are among the most violent and undisciplined inmates in the NYC Correctional System.

A site team member spoke from a NYC Police Officer perspective. He stated that in some aspects, CompStat, which is a statistical crime database that originated with the NYPD, has pushed a statistical narrative in policing which has put pressure on police commanders to push productivity within their respective commands. This push influenced the issuance of summonses, stops, and police enforcement actions by officers.

He said that this push has led to bad stops, bad summonses being issued, as well as bad arrests by the police. He stated that there needs to be more community oriented policing to have a better relationship with the community. This in fact was the policing approach under the administration of Mayor Bill de Blasio.

After the forum concluded, every organization had an information table where they were able to assist those in attendance individually. The attendees as well as the representatives of each organization held discussions about efforts to better assist those who were returning from prison to reintegrate into the community. In essence, the event entailed how to mediate and nurture life change for those negatively impacted by the criminal justice system.

CHAPTER 5
EVALUATING THE RESPONSE

There were mechanisms identified within each part of the project's plan to evaluate each goal. These evaluations were intended to guide the results of each strategy towards achieving success with each respective goal. Each strategy was assessed to evaluate the overall effectiveness of its plan of implementation. In this process, a critique was conducted of the overall results to help in determining if there were any specific aspects in each strategy that was predominate or lacking in meeting the challenge statement.

This approach in reviewing the evaluation process was intended to aid in identifying which method gave the best opportunity for meaningful transformation of black men negatively impacted by the criminal justice system. This method helped the site team to determine if focus groups, surveys, or open dialogue may have been the best method used to evaluate each phase of the plan of implementation.

This evaluation was conducted by the site team from multiple perspectives on the execution of the plan of implementation in the assessment of the overall performance of this project. Particular interest was given to successes in addressing each particular strategy with respective goals, as well as to the challenge statement. In summary, this evaluation will act as a barometer for the success of the plan of implementation.

Goal one was to raise awareness of the social and economic zeitgeist of ethnic minority enclaves, particularly those of the African American community. Strategy one

was to present, review, and discuss empirical data of the social condition of black communities, and the role which black men perform in them. In this strategy, an open discussion was held at UCBC, comprised of participants of the church's feeding program, as well as church and community members.

Statistics were given to those present at the open discussion. I presented statistical data on employment, education, health and housing. Particular attention was given to assessing responses by those present to discern if the use of law enforcement and the criminal justice system adversely impacts black men in the community.

The open discussion was well attended and the dialogue was engaging. Those in attendance brought their personal experiences and perspectives into the discussion. The issues of negative police interactions, housing, education, incarceration, and employment were discussed. There were strong sentiments of feeling targeted by the police. There was also a strong consensus that there was a lack of unity in the black community, as well as discrimination towards those who had criminal histories.

A fair number of the participants in the discussion were knowledgeable of historical events such as the Emancipation Proclamation, and the impact of slavery upon the current state of many urban enclaves. There were expressed concerns about the urgency to mentor the younger generation, in order to avoid incarceration and recidivism. There were also discussions on the impact of drugs which has caused many minority families to be fatherless.

After the open discussion concluded, the site team met to evaluate the effectiveness of strategy one. The site team agreed that there was no discussion pertaining to community healthcare concerns, and discussion pertaining to the lack of affordable

housing was minimal. Although the topic of mentoring youth was discussed, there was no discussion of addressing the lagging of minority youth in formal education.

Strategy one was specifically focused towards the contemporary state of minorities and the communities in which they live. Although there were several topics which the site team wanted the group discussion to focus on, the primary foci were intended to be on law enforcement and the criminal justice system. The site team specifically measured the effectiveness of strategy one by the amount of time as well as the dialogue on matters of the criminal justice system. It was agreed that conversation about the criminal justice system dominated the discussion, and strategy one was effective towards meeting goal one.

Strategy two was to explore historical facts and data related to African American contributions in the formation and building up of the United States of America. A documentary film titled, *Return to Glory* was shown at UCBC, and was observed by male and female viewers of various ages. The film entailed giving historical facts about Blacks contributing to economic and social systems dating back several millennia before the Common Era (BCE).

Many social mechanisms of ancient African social systems were adapted by Western society as models. The history of African contributions on contemporary systems has been successfully omitted, and is not common knowledge in studies of western academia. The documentary underlined important inventions by African Americans which have been incorporated into society, and regarded as normal in contemporary western culture.

After the film ended, the film observers gave their perspectives on the film and its relation to the contemporary state of black communities. The group discussion entailed topics which claimed that slavery and the oppression of Blacks caused black people to forget their strength as a race and lose their identity. There were also claims that too many contemporary Blacks have settled for mediocrity, and are being systematically excluded from opportunities of prosperity.

After the discussions concluded, the site team met to evaluate the effectiveness of strategy two. The effectiveness of strategy two was specifically measured by how many viewers of the documentary film acquired new information pertaining to African American contributions in contemporary society, as well as awareness of the influences of African on Western civilization.

All of the individuals that observed the film indicated that they acquired new information about historical Africa, as well as African American inventors whose ingenuities influenced contemporary America. A great deal of conversation held that Blacks need to reinvigorate their drive and innovativeness. However, the site team agreed that there was no discussion of methods on how contemporary Blacks could move towards greatness like they held in the past. There was also no discussion pertaining to the contemporary state of the black community and whether or not the criminal justice system holds any responsibility for the marginalization of Blacks.

Strategy three was to explore public and private cases and incidents of members of the black community who have committed transgressions, or been victimized by other members of the black community. Black on Black crime is strongly condemned in the black community, but Blacks are victimized by other Blacks more than any other race.

An open discussion was conducted with predominantly black men. Those

participating in the discussion were given opportunities to share their experiences. Some

of the incidents discussed by the participants entailed committing criminal acts with

firearms, being recidivists of the criminal justice system, committing drug offenses, and

one claimed to have committed a homicide. The discussion was unexpectedly transparent

by those who were willing to share past experiences, and there were no judgments or

condemnations of anyone who shared their transgressions.

After the discussion concluded, the site team met to evaluate the effectiveness of

strategy three. The effectiveness of strategy three was specifically measured by the

willingness of those in the discussion to share from their past experiences, and to see how

those experiences currently impacted them. The site team was pleased that some in the

discussion were transparent about their past. Those that committed transgressions

admitted to having regret, because their past resulted in them being incarcerated and put

limits on future employment opportunities.

However, no one in the discussion shared being victimized in the past. There were

also complaints of ill treatment by the police, as well as being discriminated against in

employment. There were also expressed feelings of being stigmatized as a criminal

because of having an arrest record. Because this strategy was predicated on the

willingness share sensitive information from their past, the site team was content with the

results.

In strategy one, a "New York Theological Seminary Informed Consent Form for

Final Doctoral Projects" form was given to all the participants to sign along with a

questionnaire. The majority turned in the consent form but no one turned in the

questionnaire. It was agreed by the site team to evaluate strategies by dialogue responses relevant to strategy intent and goal. Overall, the consensus was that the three strategies satisfied goal one.

Goal two was to motivate, inspire, challenge, and encourage the community and audience to sensitize themselves to black men who have had negative interaction with the criminal justice system. The assumption with goal two was that the person(s) of interest were not hardened, violent, or a career criminal. Those attempting to reintegrate back into society from being incarcerated can expect challenges. Many face the reality of being ostracized and then regress into destructive or criminal behavior. The Bible was used in this goal as a text that has the ability to change lives through study and application of its contents.

Strategy one was to conduct a group study session with congregants and community members on black male incarceration. The study was to explore possible causes and their effects upon their communities and families. The group discussion led to topics of the lack of affordable housing, drug and alcohol abuse and its result upon the family, homelessness, the lack of political strength in black communities, the lack of Blacks participating in elections, the disenfranchisement of Blacks in their own communities, and the lack of proper parenting which is resulting in young black men becoming gang members.

After the discussion concluded the site team met to discuss the effectiveness of strategy one. The effectiveness of strategy one was specifically measured by the willingness of those present to engage in dialogue, and the pointedness of the discussion

relevant to the incarceration of black men, reintegration, and the use of the Bible as a transforming agent.

The site team agreed that the discussion was engaging, and those that spoke had strong convictions on their topics. However, there was no discussion on biblical application for life change, little discussion on incarceration, and no discussion on reintegration. Efforts to refocus the dialogue toward these topics were attempted, but not forced upon the group. The group had strong convictions on the various subject matters discussed. As such, an opportunity for participants to express their feelings was given to them.

Strategy two was to conduct a workshop on confronting failures. This strategy was conducting during a Men's Retreat with The Greater Allen AME Cathedral of NY. Some of the items discussed were identifying goals and methods to achieve them, self-assessment of strengths and weaknesses, setting long and short term goals, evaluating reasons why past failures occurred, overcoming the shame or humiliation of failure, seeking out help when needed, and confronting failures through perseverance.

Strategy two was specifically measured by the responses of those present for the workshop, and the critique of the workshop was personally conducted with Rev. Dr. Floyd Flake. The group was engaging and there was constructive dialogue between those present at the workshop and me. No member of the site team was present. After the workshop concluded, I met with Dr. Flake to evaluate the effectiveness of strategy two.

The workshop participants were displeased that the workshop had to conclude because of time restraints. Dr. Flake gave me encouraging comments of approval for providing insight on a subject in which he was well versed. Based on the responses from

those present at the workshop and positive critique from Dr. Flake, I concluded that strategy two was successful with informing goal two.

Strategy three was to present and discuss a contemporary movie in dialogue with the Bible. The movie, *Courageous*, was shown to engage viewers from a cinematic experience while engaging them with contemporary life issues and the transforming abilities of Christian values and the Bible. The viewers were attentive for the duration of the movie.

After the movie concluded, a group discussion was held so that those present could share their perspectives of the movie. Some of the discussion entailed viewers being sensitized to the humanization of some police officers. They stated that police officers experienced challenging situations in life like many other individuals. They also have to deal with the consequences of their actions. There was also discussion of the efforts in attempting to make good on past wrongs, holding each other accountable, being able to reconcile with past transgressions, the importance of having a positive father figure in early development, and the ability of Christian values, the Bible and the Church to change lives.

No site team member was present when the movie was presented to the group. However, the site team viewed the movie prior to its being viewed by the group. After the discussion concluded I evaluated the effectiveness of strategy three in terms of group responses relevant to the groups' engagement with the movie. I also considered their ability to recognize key moments of reconciliation and forgiveness, and the transforming ability of the Bible.

The group was engaged with the movie and observed it beyond entertainment value. Some viewers identified with certain aspects of the movie which caused personal reflections. The group was able to identify pivotal moments of reconciliation, as well as the transforming ability of the church upon people's lives. However, the movie did not noticeably move any viewer towards actionable change in their life to embrace Christian values. The movie viewers were engaged and some were able to reflect on their life experiences from the scenarios in the movie, as well as acknowledge the transforming ability of the Bible. Because of this I concluded that strategy three was successful.

Although each strategy in goal two had positive results, collectively they did not meet the intention of the goal pertaining to community sensitization towards those reintegrating from prison, or explore ways to build relations with public and private entities to partner with reintegration. Instead there was sensitization towards police, venting of personal experiences, and reflection on growing up in their respective homes in the community. Although the strategies were not pointed towards the intent of goal one, they succeeded in the personal development of the participants.

Goal three was to find practical ways to help reclaim black men who have been negatively impacted by the criminal justice system into becoming active contributors in churches and the community. Strategy one was to conduct a forum on police encounters to inform and educate participants of appropriate actions and conduct when they have an encounter with the police. The interpretations of language, voice tone, movements are all factors when someone encounters the police.

Some of the topics discussed in the forum were police profiling, body cameras, actions and situations which may escalate and de-escalate the intensity of police

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encounters, police corruption, community policing, and stop, question and frisk. The attendees of the forum were engaged with the law enforcement facilitators on the discussed topics. The majority of the attendees held opposing beliefs on certain aspects of police encounters with the law enforcement facilitators.

After the facilitators explained certain variables in police encounters which may inform police action, some attendees understood why a police officer may act differently depending upon the situation, which civilians may be unaware of. It was clear from the facilitators' perspectives that there needed to be more educating the public about police-civilian encounters. There also needs to be some mending with the police-community relationships.

After the forum concluded the site team met to evaluate the effectiveness of strategy number one. Strategy one was specifically measured by the engagement of the attendees, their responses, and whether or not newly acquired awareness of police encounters was obtained. The attendees were engaged and held opinions about what police officers should do when they encounter civilians.

Their opinions were well taken by the facilitators, but the attendees did not understand the differences inherent in various police encounters. The facilitators gave examples from their personal experiences which at times gave validity to attendee claims, and at other times challenged blanket perceptions about all police officers. The forum was informative and educational to the attendees. It was agreed upon by the site team that strategy one was successful in goal three.

Strategy two was to conduct a workshop for disseminating information and skill building to the participants. An aim in this strategy was to encourage black men

negatively impacted by the criminal justice system to forge productive relationships with churches and the community with restoring their lives. Strategy three was to hold a communal celebration to affirm black men and the church's commitment to join together in partnership. An aim in this strategy was to motivate and recognize the efforts of those in the reintegration process that were attempting to effect positive change in their lives.

It was decided to combine these two strategies to maximize effectiveness in meeting goal three. This event was well publicized and a considerable amount of time and effort went into its planning by the site team. The event was intended as a one stop resource center for youth gang mediation, reintegration resources, as well as information on employment, housing, and healthcare coverage.

The representatives from the various public and private entities were subject matter experts and gave informed presentations, supplied literature, answered questions and met individually with people who sought more information. After the forum concluded the site team met to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies two and three. These strategies were specifically measured by the responses of the participants towards the available resources present at the forum.

The panel, presenters, and available resources at the forum were well orchestrated. The site team expected more participants to be present given the publicity and resources that were present. Nevertheless, those who came and took advantage of the resources had the opportunity to directly engage program directors. Other than attendance which is not in the site team's control, the site team agreed that the forum was a success.

The overall effectiveness of the respective strategies within each goal was weighted to ascertain if the challenge statement was addressed. It was concluded that the

execution of the plan of implementation was effective, exploring possible factors which may contribute to the disproportionate incarceration of black men, as well as seeking possible ways which may positively impact black men from negative interaction with the criminal justice system.

The mediation between the collapse of meaning and of sustaining and nurturing changes towards a productive life for black men negatively impacted by the criminal justice system is a necessary conversation which must begin with rehabilitation programs geared towards reintegration, and reintegration mechanisms geared towards restoration.

CHAPTER 6
MINISTERIAL COMPETENCIES

Prophetic Agent

The research question associated with goal one was, what are the social, economic and cultural factors that lead black males to disproportionate encounters with the criminal justice system? Goal one was to raise awareness of the social and economic zeitgeist of ethnic minority enclaves, particularly those of the African American community. The ministerial competency associated with this goal is *prophetic agent*.

"Prophecy in the Bible is more than a matter of ecstatic speech uttered through the power of the Spirit, and much more than merely telling the future. A prophet is one who does not 'foretell' so much as 'forth-tell' the truth. As a prophet, a minister speaks the truth in love, communicates awareness of social injustices, and sensitizes others to spiritual and ethical implications of various structures and practices in the church, community, and in the wider society."[122]

To this end, the aim of raising awareness of the social and economic state of the black community required the skill not only to analyze the social structure and look at possible causes and solutions; it also entailed illuminating cases in the community of injustice that fell within the realm of this ministerial competency. This also aided in

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[122] Wanda M. Lundy and Joseph V. Crockett, *Doctor of Ministry: Mentor and Research Development Handbook* (New York: New York Theological Seminary, 2012), 74-92.

discerning ethical implications regarding the larger society and the black community to help identify areas that require social change.

The site team agreed that in this competency, there should be a passion to identify injustice, and a desire to inspire change within the targeted audience. This entailed a communal effort in seeking methods of change because of the sense of ownership, responsibility, and accountability for other members of the community. This competency was evaluated in relation to the process and outcome of the research question and strategies of goal number one.

Regarding the competency of prophetic agent, it was stated by the site team that the title of the project spoke to the current narratives of concern for many people in the black community. The site team members agreed that the analysis and awareness that was involved with goal one was informative and enlightening. The project raised ethical implications for the need to change how inmates are reintegrated back into communities.

In spite of the site team being comprised of professionals in law enforcement, the group gave credit for bringing situations in the criminal justice system that some may perceive to be anti-law enforcement. However, in this project I was committed to presenting facts, not alternative facts. The site team also agreed that the project raised critical awareness of the rich history of the black race to give consciousness and juxtaposition to the current state of the black community. This awareness heightened the urgency of the need to correct the trend of recidivism and generational criminal histories of black men.

Further, as law enforcement professionals, the site team was sensitive to community mistrust of the law enforcement because of growing disconnect in the police-

community relationship. The site team commended outreach efforts which gave voice to members of the community to better understand their personal challenges in order to inform the need for social change in the community.

Religious Educator

The research question associated with goal two was, what are the lessons in the Bible regarding responsibility to and for those who need forgiveness, justice, and reconciliation? Goal two was to motivate, inspire, challenge, and encourage the community audience to sensitize towards black men who have had negative interaction with the criminal justice system. The ministerial competency of *religious educator* was associated with this goal.

"A religious educator challenges the hearers to discover new resources within themselves and others. He or she invites others to a new and more spiritually-enlightened consciousness about self and society. With creativity and courage the religious educator prompts us to ask new questions and work toward healing, reconciliation and justice. Such a challenge elicits personal growth in the gifts of the Spirit, which in turn overflow into the life of the community."[123]

The site team concluded one task was to use the Bible in a way to show relevance and connectivity to black men in contemporary settings required preparation, communication, and organization of subject matter in open dialogue in nexus with the Bible. This also required a knowledge base of the Bible as well as the concerns of contemporary black men. Further, the methods that were used as vehicles to progress the dialogue towards the goal of inspiring, challenging, and encouraging needed to be

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[123] Ibid.

relevant because the targeted audience needed to stay engaged in order to maximize positive response towards change. The qualifying word was to continue.

This competency was evaluated in correlation with the outcome of goal number two. The site team approved of the strategies associated with goal two, and concurred that the goal was satisfied. They were pleases with the narrative of "The Prodigal Son" as a biblical lesson which spoke to an aim of forgiveness, and reconciliation. This narrative showed and allowed different interpretive approaches while engaging the biblical text which was effective.

There was also an approval of the methods employed as an effective pedagogical approach which engaged the targeted audience in practical ways in which they could participate. The site team claimed that in African American communities, community members to not take stock in the overall zeitgeist of the community because of individual challenges of community members.

This project brought out various aspects of disconnection within the black community among community residents. The team agreed that the employed methods informed and taught in an engaging way which underscored the need for change in the trend of black men and their disparate interactions with the criminal justice system.

The site team also encouraged the inclusion of conducted workshops on finances, credit, wills, living wills, and end of life preparation as a part of this project. I opted to omit those workshops because I believed it would have been a secondary tier of relevancy and importance as it related to the challenge statement. The qualifying word was to continue.

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Leadership

The research question associated with goal three was, how can we build and incorporate black men impacted by the criminal justice system and community back into the church? Goal three was to find practical ways to help reclaim black men who have been negatively impacted by the criminal justice system to become active contributors in the church and community. The ministerial competency associated with this goal is *leadership*.

"A leader is one who creates an environment in which the gifts of the Spirit may flourish. She or he is effective in empowering others to realize their own calling or gifts, and facilitates opportunities in which others can flourish. Such a person is characterized by a willingness to listen and respond, the capacity to take the initiative when appropriate, the ability to delegate responsibility to capable people, and the sensitivity to share resources."[124]

The site team resolved that the plan of conducting group dialogues revealed openness to listen and learn from the ideas of others in order to enhance the prospects of desired results in this project. They asserted this was vital for any leader to increase the possibilities of success. Conducting an information sharing workshop was an example of planning and delegating which displayed good logistical skills. The sharing of public resources with the community afforded others the ability to utilize services that they may not otherwise been aware of. This information sharing also enabled clarity towards addressing the challenge statement.

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[124] Ibid.

The site team claimed that as the project was developing, it increased their motivation personally and professionally. As the framework of the project developed, the site team members also increased their awareness of the construct of various components of the criminal justice system and their roles individually as well as systematically in the cycle of black men and the black plight. This simplified the task for the site team in finding different bodies of skill sets in order to meet specific goals and needs associated with the success of this project.

Although some strategies in the project entailed matters of sensitivity, the approaches used minimized feelings of discomfort and fostered an atmosphere which individuals felt open to share. "As long as people are ignored, as long as they are voiceless, as long as they are trampled by the iron feet of exploitation, there is the danger that they, like little children will have their emotional outbursts which will break out in violence."[125] The qualifying word was to continue.

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[125] Martin Luther King, Jr., *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1968), 102-134.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
DEMONSTRATION PROJECT PROPOSAL

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION TO THE SETTING

The anticipated setting for this project is the United Community Baptist Church (UCBC). The address is 545 Utica Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11203. This location is in Kings County. I, Rev. Colin L. Campbell am the Senior Pastor.

In exploring the location and setting, I believe that it is important to explore the economic zeitgeist of the community. In doing so, here is some recent publicized data to aid in the understanding of the state of the community. Based on 2014 data, there are approximately 19,746,277 people in the state of New York, and 8,497,079 people in New York City[1], of which 2,621,793 reside in Kings County.[2]

The church is located in Community District #17. The estimated population in this district based on 2010 data is 155,252, which is a Decrease from 165, 758 in the year 2000.[3] Of this district population, 127,900 are reportedly Black; 3,909 are reportedly White, and 8,754 are reportedly Hispanic.[4] These are the three major ethnic groups within this district. In zip code 11203, the 2013 population was 79,572; males comprised of 44.4% and females comprised of 56.6% of the population.[5] In District #17, there were approximately 32,685 individuals that had no health insurance, and 22.7% of families had

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[1] http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/36/3651000.html.

[2] http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/36/36081.html.

3 http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/pdf/lucds/bk17profile.pdf.

[4] http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/pdf/census/puma_demo_08to10_acs.pdf#bk17.

[5] http://www.city-data.com/zips/11203.html.

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an annual income that was below the poverty level. An estimated 32,384 families in the district population were recipients of some form of monetary public assistance.[6]

For this community, these numbers indicate a serious need for employment to provide economic stability so individuals of the community can financially sustain themselves. These figures are also a strong indication that there needs to be development of commercial businesses to establish employment opportunities for community residence. In 2014 there were approximately 202 vacant lots and a steadily decreasing number of city owned property within the District. From year 2010 to 2014, there has been an increased number of developers seeking property for development with the existing zoning rules.[7]

Current District reporting indicates that there is also a rapid acquisition of multiple dwelling properties and construction of large apartment buildings for ethical and religious constituents. This has resulted in a large number of complaints of overdevelopment in the community. This unprecedented development trend has led to increased numbers of displaced residents who cannot afford the increased cost of housing. In 2013 the housing foreclosure rate per 1,000 for 1-4 family properties was 37.2%. Community District 17 officials acknowledges this trend and plans to explore rezoning laws to hinder predatory developers operating within the District.

The displacements of residents and the lack of affordable housing has contributed to an increase of illegal home conversions for housing and unlicensed home improvement construction, such as using private garages for business purposes. This puts residents at

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[6] http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/pdf/census/puma_econ_08to10_acs.pdf#bk17.

[7] http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/neigh_info/bk17_info.shtml.

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risk, and has resulted in requesting assistance from the Buildings Department to monitor

existing and new construction.[8]

One drawback in this development is that Community District research indicated

that infrastructure within the district makes the community susceptible to flooding of

homes, and extensive road repairs need to be completed. For social and community

services, there are 7 mental health locations, and a total of 21 food pantry and soup

kitchen facilities to aid in meeting the needs of individuals within the community who are

seeking these services.

Regarding public schools in the District, they are overcrowded. The high school

graduation rate is 34.4%, the dropout rate is 14.5%, and only 6.1% of graduating students

are considered college ready.[9] Graduating high school students with Regents Diplomas

are significantly below state average[10] and students that are rated as college ready are

significantly below the city average for high school seniors.[11]

As with other Districts comprised mostly of ethnic minority students, there is a

consistent pattern of underperformance when data is compared to Districts comprised of

mostly Caucasians students. To bring attention to the disparate results along racial lines,

the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) filed a

complaint with the United Stated Department of Education alleging discriminatory

testing practices are being administered by New York City Department of Education.

Citywide minority students comprise of approximately 70% of the middle school student

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[8] http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/neigh_info/statement_needs/bk17_statement.pdf.

[9] http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/neigh_info/statement_needs/bk17_statement.pdf.

[10] https://reportcards.nysed.gov/files/2010-11/CIR-2011-342800011896.pdf.

[11] http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

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body, but only 17% of the students in two of the city's coveted middle schools are minorities.[12] The NAACP alleged that discriminating entrance exams also exclude minorities from the city's elite high schools. Although White and Asian students comprise of approximately 31% of the high school student body citywide, they occupy more than 85% of the seats in these elite schools.[13]

The reported population that is 18 years old and under is 35,611. Yet, there is a dire need of Youth Centers and publicly funded recreational facilities to accommodate them. There is one Police Precinct to patrol the streets in this district, which is the 67th Police Precinct. District officials have requested augmented police presence for crime control and gun violence.

Residential housing that is with ¼ mile of a public park is 63.1%, which is significantly less than the borough-wide percentile of 86%. Mass Transit Authority bus lines B8, B12, B17, and B46 provides transportation service within the District. Approximately 66% of the residence rely public transportation daily. Although there are four bus lines that provides service in the District, many commuters rely heavily on commuter vans because of inadequate bus service during rush hours.

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[12] http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/education/white-asian-students-dominate-city-top-middle-schools-article-1.1207233.

[13] http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/education/naacp-claims-discriminatory-admission-practices-city-elite-high-schools-article-1.1169240.

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CHAPTER 2
PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS OF THE CHALLENGE STATEMENT

The United Stated portrays a symbolism of unprejudiced justice by using the image of Lady Justice, who is blind-folded and holding a sword and scale. This image is intended to depict impartial and equal trial of justice. The tenets of Lady Justice are idealistic and provides sound framework for structures of justice. However, in humanity the dynamics of human influences and inputs upon and within social structures cannot be minimized. Consequently, those that are the most influential are afforded the greatest opportunities to influence difference within these structures. This would leave those that are the least influential the least likely to influence difference within these structures.

The criminal justice is not exempt from human influence. Therefore, the lower the positions upon the socio-economic scale, the higher the likelihood of having negative and severe interaction with the criminal justice system. As such, minority enclaves within NYC, particularly those of the African American community are impacted the greatest. Based upon the NYPD Crime and Enforcement Activity in New York City Report (January 1 – June 30, 2012), in the category of Murder and Non-Negligent Manslaughter blacks comprised of 64.1% of murdered victims, and the arrestees are black in approximately 55.3% of these cases. The next closest race is Hispanics which comprised of 25.0% of the victims, and 29.4% of arrestees. Whites comprised of 7.1% and 11.2% respectively.

<div align="center">5</div>

Although this data gives information for NYC within a certain time frame, the percentile of blacks nationwide negatively impacted by the Criminal Justice System is disproportionately high in correlation to the United States population. Blacks comprised of 12.6% of the U.S. population, Hispanics comprised of 16.3% of the population, and Whites comprised of 72.4% of the U.S. population.[14] Based upon recent data, nationally blacks comprised of 2, 207 individuals per 100,000 that are incarcerated. The next ethic group is Hispanics with 996 individuals per 100,000; whites comprised of 380 per 100,000. Blacks also comprised of 42% of death row inmates nationally while Hispanics and Whites comprised of 12% and 43% respectively.[15] These are sobering numbers related to the current state of blacks and black men in the United Stated of America.

It is evident that there is systematic detriment to black men within the social and economic structures currently in operation which adversely results in negative interactions with the Criminal Justice System. The origins of this detriment may very well be rooted within the historic, social, and economic beginnings of blacks in the United States.   However, the foci of this demonstration project will not go in depth with the dynamics of African American history, but will approach this detriment from a narrower lens of the criminal justice perspectives. The members of the site team, including myself have a combined total of one hundred and ten years of experience working with the Criminal Justice System. This includes Federal, and Local Law Enforcement,   as well as Correction and Probation Law Enforcement. These different

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[14] www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-06.pdf.

[15] Source: NAACP Legal Defense Fund, "Death Row USA" (April 1, 2012).

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perspectives and experiences will be combined in this demonstration project to positively

impact change.

CHAPTER 3
PLAN OF IMPLEMENTAION

In an effort to adequately address the challenge statement in this demonstration project, three goals have been established. With each of these three goals, three separate strategies will be used for each of these three goals. Hence, there will be three goals and nine strategies.

Goal one is to raise awareness of the social and economic zeitgeist of ethnic minority enclaves, particularly those of the African American community.   I believe that it is important to explore these aspects in order to aid or improve understanding of black communities.   The research question associated with goal one is, what are the social, economic and cultural factors that lead black males to disproportionate encounters with the Criminal Justice System? The ministerial competency associated with this goal is prophetic agent.

Strategy one is to present, to review, and to discuss empirical data of the social condition of the black community, and black men. In this strategy the status of employment, education, health and housing will be presented for open dialogue with a targeted audience of primarily black men.

Strategy two is to explore historical facts and data as it relates to African American contributions in the formation and up building of the United States of America, particularly the contributions of black men in history.   Histories of African American contributions are not routinely taught in the education system in the United States below university level education. Even then, the majority of higher learning institutes do not make African American studies mandatory.

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Strategy three is to explore public and private cases and incidents of members who are from black communities who have committed transgressions, or been victimized by other members of the black community. This will be an open dialogue primarily with members of the black community.

Goal one will be evaluated by conducting focus group sessions related to each of the three strategies. A questionnaire will be administered to ascertain if the presented data is newly acquired or previously acquired knowledge, and if the information was viewed as relevant for black men and the Criminal Justice System. It is anticipated that goal one can be completed by the end of July 2013.

Goal two is to motivate, inspire, challenge, and encourage the community audience to sensitize to black men who have had negative interaction with the Criminal Justice System. The assumption in this goal is that the person(s) of interest is not a hardened, violent, or career criminal. The research question associated with goal two is, what are the lessons in the Bible regarding responsibility to and for those who need forgiveness, justice, and reconciliation? The ministerial competency of religious educator will be associated with this goal.

Strategy one is to conduct a group study session with congregants and community members on black male incarceration causes and effects upon the community and its families. In this strategy, I will work with the participants to identify possible factors which are catalyst that permeates negative interaction with the Criminal Justice System.

Strategy two is to conduct a workshop on confronting failures. This will entail addressing some of the core issues that black men deal with that permeates frustration

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and feelings of inadequacy. This will include identifying, defining and learning how to confront feelings of failure in the personal and professional settings.

Strategy three is to present and discuss a contemporary movie in dialogue with the Bible. Among the movies in consideration are the Shawshank Redemption, Glory, and Courageous. This will allow the participants who may or may not have viewed the movie before to look at it from a lens other than entertainment. Aspects of justice, reconciliation and forgiveness are honed upon in this strategy.

Goal two will be evaluated by receiving verbal and written feedback from the participants. The level of enthusiasm to see or facilitate methods of transformation and change towards a more meaningful relation with private and public entities by the participants will aid in determining the effectiveness of goal two. It is anticipated that goal two will be completed by the end of August 2013.

Goal three is to find practical ways to help reclaim black men who have been negatively impacted by the Criminal Justice System to become active contributors in the church and community. The research question associated with goal three is how can we build and incorporate black men impacted by the Criminal Justice System and community back into the church? The ministerial competency associated with this goal is leadership.

Strategy one is to conduct a focus group to seek ways which will identify practical steps for engaging and reclaiming black men that have been impacted by the Criminal Justice System. This may entail incorporating various approaches that arise to aid in reaching the goal.

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Strategy two is to conduct a workshop series for disseminating information and skill building to aid in healthy dialogue between the church, the community, and black men that have been impacted by the Criminal Justice System. This may entail including established resources that are familiar with the dissemination of information to the public.

Strategy three is to hold a communal celebration to affirm black men and the churches commitment to join together in partnership. This celebration is to recognize any accomplishment regardless of how broad or small the accomplishment. This celebration is to include participants that are representatives within the Criminal Justice System.

Goal three will be evaluated by the overall response to the request for supportive systems and awareness of the need to address black men that have been impacted by the Criminal Justice System. In evaluating this goal, the complete impact may not be evident in a communal celebration. It is anticipated that goal three will be completed by the end of October 2013.

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CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This chapter briefly expounds upon the three research questions that are associated with their respective goal within the plan of implementation. Research question number one was what are the social, economic and cultural factors that lead black males to disproportionate encounters with the Criminal Justice System? In exploring this research question, the here and now issues are intended to be brought forth. Contemporary issues that black men are challenged with within and outside of their communities are put in the forefront to help give direction to relevant subject matter. This will also entail looking at historical contributions of black men in the formation of the history of the United States of America. This should directly inform the question of how meaning is made for black men.

Research question number two was what are the lessons in the Bible regarding responsibility to and for those who need forgiveness, justice, and reconciliation? To aid in addressing this research question, direct engagement with the Bible in dialogue with contemporary issues of black men will be explored. Hermeneutical interpretation of biblical text and passages will be viewed from the perspectives of the participants and their social issues. The social and economic location of each respective participant may inform or influence the interpretation of biblical text and impact their hermeneutics to the text. This research question directly addresses the question of how texts are read.

Research question number three was how can we build and incorporate black men impacted by the Criminal Justice System and community back into the church? Within this research question lays the fundamentals of purpose for this demonstration project.

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This is the primary vehicle that will aid in enabling sustainable transformation and change by those that are subject to the workings of this demonstration project. This question addresses the issue of mediating meanings relative to the goal. It also addresses how meanings are nurtured and sustained for black men and their nexus with the church and community.

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CHAPTER 5
EVALUATION OF THE PLAN OF IMPLEMENTATION

There are mechanisms identified within the plan of implementation to evaluate each goal. These evaluations are intended to guide the strategies towards achieving success with their respective goals. There will also be an overall evaluation to assess the overall effect of the plan of implementation. In this process, critique of the overall results will help in determining if there are any specific aspects in each strategy that was predominate in meeting the challenge statement.

This macro approach in viewing the evaluation process will also aid in identifying which method may give the best opportunity for meaningful transformation of black men impacted by the Criminal Justice System. This will determine if focus groups, surveys, or open dialogue should be utilized, and at what particular phase.

This evaluation will be conducted with the site team for multiple perspectives with the execution of the plan of implementation and the assessment of the overall performance of the implementation with particular interest with its success in addressing each particular goal, as well as the challenge statement. In summarization, this evaluation will act as a barometer for the success of the plan of implementation.

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CHAPTER 6
MINISTERIAL COMPETENCIES

The research question associated with goal one is, what are the social, economic and cultural factors that lead black males to disproportionate encounters with the Criminal Justice System? Goal one is to raise awareness of the social and economic zeitgeist of ethnic minority enclaves, particularly those of the African American community. The ministerial competency associated with this goal is prophetic agent.

Prophecy in the Bible is more than a matter of ecstatic speech uttered through the power of the Spirit, and much more than merely telling the future. A prophet is one who does not "foretell" so much as "forth-tell" the truth. As a prophet, a minister speaks the truth in love, communicates an awareness of social injustices, and sensitizes others to spiritual and ethical implications of various structures and practices in the church, community, and in the wider society.

To this end, the aim of raising awareness of the social and economic state of the black community requires the skill of not only to analyze the social structure and look at possible causes and solutions; it also entails illuminating cases in the community of injustice that falls within the realm of this ministerial competency. This also aids in discerning ethical implications regarding the larger society and the black community to help identify areas that require social change. In this competency, there is also a supplement to aid the goal which is to spark a passion for justice and to inspire change within the targeted audience. This entails a communal effort in seeking methods of change because of the sense of ownership, responsibility, and accountability for other

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members of the community. This competency will be evaluated in relation to the process and outcome of the research question and strategies of goal number one.

The research question associated with goal two is, what are the lessons in the Bible regarding responsibility to and for those who need forgiveness, justice, and reconciliation? Goal two is motivate, inspire, challenge, and encourage the community audience to sensitize to black men who have had negative interaction with the Criminal Justice System. The ministerial competency of religious educator will be associated with this goal.

Religious educators challenge the hearers to discover new resources within themselves and others. He or she invites others to a new and more spiritually-enlightened consciousness about self and society. With creativity and courage the religious educator prompts us to ask new questions and work toward healing, reconciliation and justice. Such a challenge elicits personal growth in the gifts of the Spirit, which in turn overflow into the life of the community.

With the task of using the Bible in a way to show relevance and connectivity to black men in the contemporary setting requires preparation, communication, and organization of subject matter in open dialogue with others in nexus with the Bible. This also requires a knowledge base of the Bible as well as the concerns of the contemporary black man. Further, the methods that are used as the vehicle to progress the dialogue towards the goal of inspiring, challenging, and encouraging is relevant because the targeted audience needs to stay engaged in order to maximize positive inputs towards change. This competency will be evaluated in correlation with the outcome of goal number two.

The research question associated with goal three is how can we build and incorporate black men impacted by the Criminal Justice System and community back into the church? Goal three is to find practical ways to help reclaim black men who have been negatively impacted by the Criminal Justice System to become active contributors in the church and community. The ministerial competency associated with this goal is leadership. A leader is one who creates an environment in which the gifts of the Spirit may flourish. She or he is effective in empowering others to realize their own calling or gifts, and facilitates opportunities in which others can flourish. Such a person is characterized by a willingness to listen and respond, the capacity to take the initiative when appropriate, the ability to delegate responsibility to capable people, and the sensitivity to share resources.

The plan of conducting a focus group shows that there is an openness and receptiveness in listening to the thoughts and ideas of others. This is a vital task for a leader to increase the possibility of success. Conducting an information sharing workshop shows a willingness to share resources and aids individuals in finding different bodies of skill sets in order to meet specific goals and needs. The sharing of public resources with the community affords others the ability to utilize services and assets that they may not otherwise be aware of. Information sharing also enables clarity of direction to aid in accomplishing set goals. Leadership entails motivating others to achieve their best efforts, as well as to acknowledge and appreciate others for a job well done. This competency will be evaluated on a broad scale in correlation with the outcome of this demonstration project. Responses, whether it is written or oral as well as participation and testimonials will have weight in this evaluation.

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APPENDIX 1
TIMELINE

The below time line is dated with considerations given to for the completions as well as drafting the results of the stated activity.

In February 2013, it is anticipated that this demonstration project will be evaluated and approved by authorizing parties.

In February 2013, attend the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference which will be held in Dallas, TX.

In May 2013, strategy number one of goal number one is to be completed.

In June 2013, strategy number two of goal number one is to be completed.

In July 2013, strategy number three of goal number one is to be completed and the goal will be evaluated with the site team.

In July 2013, strategy number one of goal number two is to be completed.

In August 2013, strategy number two of goal number two is to be completed.

In August 2013, strategy number three of goal number two is to be completed and the goal will be evaluated with the site team.

In August 2013, strategy number one of goal number three is to be completed.

In September 2013, strategy number two of goal number three is to be completed.

In October 2013, strategy number three of goal number three is be completed and a communal celebration held to affirm black men and the churches commitment to join together in partnership. It is at this stage where summarizations and conclusions will be reflected upon in the course of evaluating the performance of the demonstration project.

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In February 2013, the estimated cost of attending the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference in Dallas, TX is one thousand five hundred dollars.

In March 2013, the estimated cost for meetings, copies, supplies and commissaries is sixty dollars.

In April 2013, the estimated cost for meetings, copies, supplies and commissaries is sixty dollars.

In May 2013, the estimated cost for meetings, copies, supplies and commissaries is sixty dollars.

In June 2013, the estimated cost for meetings, copies, supplies and commissaries is sixty dollars.

In July 2013, the estimated cost for meetings copies, supplies and commissaries is one hundred and fifty dollars.

In August 2013, the estimated cost for meetings, copies, supplies and commissaries is one hundred and fifty dollars.

In September 2013, the estimated cost for meetings, copies, supplies and commissaries is seventy five dollars.

In October 2013, the estimated cost for meetings, copies, supplies and commissaries is four hundred dollars.

In December 2013, the estimated cost for editing services is seven hundred and fifty dollars.

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APPENDIX B
GUIDELINES FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

Guidelines for Human Subject Research Conducted by Persons Affiliated
With New York Theological Seminary

Definition of Terms

Research	means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. (Federal Policy, also sometimes called the "Common Rule," codified at Title 45 Part 46 of the Code of Federal Regulations, or, 45 CFR 46.102)
Human subject	means a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains data or private information. (45 CFR 46.102)
Risk	means the extent to which a human, subject to research procedures, may be exposed to physical, psychological, or other types of harm.
Minimal risk	means that the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. (45 CFR 46.102)
Informed consent	means subjects' willingness to participate after the researcher communicates to subjects, in language they can understand, information that the subjects may reasonably be expected to desire in considering whether or not to participate, and that minimizes the possibility of coercion or undue influence.
Assent	means a child's affirmative agreement to participate in research. Mere failure to object should not, absent affirmative agreement, be construed as assent.
Permission	means the agreement of parent(s) or guardian to the participation of their child or ward in research.
Confidentiality	pertains to the treatment of information that an individual has disclosed in a relationship of trust and with the expectation that it will not be divulged to others without permission in ways that are inconsistent with the understanding of the original disclosure.
Anonymity	means having an unknown or unacknowledged name.
Privacy	is the control over the extent, timing, and circumstances of sharing oneself (physically, behaviorally, or intellectually) with others.
Protocol	is the formal design or plan of an experiment or research activity; specifically, the plan submitted to an IRB for review. The protocol includes a description of the research design or methodology to be employed, the eligibility requirements for prospective subjects and controls, the treatment regimen(s), and the proposed methods of analysis that will be performed on the collected data.
Institutional Review Board	is the specially constituted review body established or designated by an entity to protect the welfare of human subjects recruited to participate in behavioral research.

It is expected that all persons who conduct human subject research under the auspices of New York Theological Seminary will treat everyone participating in their research with appropriate professional respect, regard, and care.

New York Theological Seminary distinguishes five separate levels of human subject research which demand
different degrees of the researcher's and supervising professor's attention. The following areas
are ranked in order of degree of risk (1 being the highest and 4 being the lowest risk):

1) Any human subject research which will be published for public consumption.
2) Any human subject research submitted for classes where the information is disseminated to students or shared in class discussion.
3) Any human subject research which is submitted solely to the professor and will not be seen by the student's peers.
4) Any human subject research where the probability or magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater, in and of themselves, than those ordinarily encountered in daily life during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.

The following directives are intended to guide our efforts and shall be noted and discussed by the instructor in every class which involves human subject research:

1. **Informed Consent (see attached forms):**

Student researchers or principal investigators shall articulate in writing, to the best of their ability and knowledge and without coercion or undue influence, all points noted below to all subjects included in their research, prior to their participation:
(A) The purpose of the research;
(B) All research procedures to be followed;
(C) The expected duration of the subject's participation;
(D) Any foreseeable risks or discomforts to the subjects;
(E) Any benefits to the subject or others which may reasonably be expected from the research;
(F) That all reasonable attempts to disguise both the location and context where the research is conducted, and the participants' identities will be made;
(G) The manner and extent to which the anonymity and or confidentiality of the records identifying the subject will be maintained;
(H) The importance of candor;
(I) How the results are shared; and
(J) The possibility of publication.

Investigators shall not use individuals as subjects unless satisfied that they, or others legally responsible for their well-being, consent to participation freely and with understanding of the consequences. Subjects shall not be induced to participate by any means or in any circumstances that might affect their ability to decide freely. It shall be made clear to subjects that they are free to withdraw from active participation in the research at any time. Subjects who indicate a desire to withdraw shall be allowed to do so promptly and without discontent displayed by the researcher.

2. Confidentiality/Anonymity

Investigators shall respect and attempt to guard and protect the privacy of research subjects. Investigators shall protect confidential information given them, advising subjects in advance of any risks or limits upon their ability to insure that the information will remain confidential/anonymous. Investigators shall document procedures for protecting confidentiality and will document that these procedures were implemented and honored during the entire course of the study.

3. Disclosure of affiliation and sponsorship

Investigators should clearly indicate their relationship with New York Theological Seminary. When indicating their relationship with the seminary, they must also disclose whether the research is sponsored by New York Theological Seminary

4. Requirements for review

Any classroom assignment requiring human subject research is subject to the review of the Academic Dean or his/her designee. The Academic Dean or his/her designee shall review all project proposals and, upon determining that risk is minimal, decide whether a full review is necessary or not. *Minimal risk* means that the probability and magnitude of physical or psychological harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

Research shall be subject to full review by the Academic Dean or his or her designee and the IRB if it is deemed to pose more than minimal risk to subjects. Such risks include:

(A) responses or observations of the subject being recorded in such a way that direct identification of the subject may be possible; or

(B) the responses or observations of the subject, if they became known outside the research, could reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subject's financial standing, employability; or reputation, or

(C) the research deals with sensitive aspects of the subject's own personhood or behavior, such as exposing sensitive personal information or secrets, illegal conduct, drug use, sexual behavior, or use of alcohol; or

(D) participation in the investigative process may produce negative emotional, psychological, behavioral, or relational responses in some research subjects.

5. Suspension of Research

Research shall be immediately suspended and reviewed if investigators observe that the above risk factors are present or if they observe any adverse consequences that may be attributable to their research.

6. The IRB

When New York Theological Seminary faculty, staff, or students, are involved in research conducted with human subjects at risk, the research activity must be reviewed by the Academic Dean or his or her designee and/or the New York Theological Seminary Internal Review Board (IRB). The IRB has the authority to approve, require modification in, or disapprove of all such research activities.

Human subjects are involved if: 1) there is an intervention or an interaction with a living person that would not be occurring or would be occurring in some other fashion, but for this research, or 2) identifiable private data/information will be obtained for this research in a form associable with an individual.

New York Theological Seminary Internal Review Board (IRB) is comprised of the Academic Dean, the Director of CSPUR, and at least one faculty member.

Doctor of Ministry Program: General guidelines for ethical human subject research shall be covered in the two DMin Foundational Courses: Mentor and Research Development I and II.

Final Doctoral Project Proposal: New York Theological Seminary's IRB shall review every final
doctoral project proposal prior to its final approval in order to determine whether the seminary guidelines are being met, to assess potential risks to participants, and to make recommendations for possible revisions of the proposal. Students may not begin their final doctoral research project until the proposal has been approved by the IRB.

The following are four possible outcomes of this review:
1) The application is approved as submitted
2) The application is approved with specific required revisions
3) The application must be revised and resubmitted
4) The application is disapproved

The Academic Dean of New York Theological Seminary will convene meetings of the IRB to implement this policy in November, March and June. If, in the Dean's judgment, a research project involves "minimal risk," the committee may consist of the Dean (or his or her designee) and the DMin Director or another APTS faculty member. When greater risk is possible, the Dean will request that the full IRB review the project. This may include inviting the DMin researcher to be part of the deliberations.

Research proposals must be submitted to the IRB at least fourteen (14) days before its meeting. Any research proposals submitted to the IRB for a full review will be distributed to the members at least ten (10) days prior to a meeting. Notification of the action taken by the IRB will be sent to the investigator no later than five (5) days after the meeting. Notification will be made in a standard form; notification will, if necessary, include a description of any contingencies and, in the case of disapproval, include a statement of the IRB's reasons.

7. IRB Records
The IRB shall maintain digital records for three years in the Office of the Academic Dean:
1. Copies of Research Protocol Applications.
2. Original Consent Forms.
3. Minutes of IRB meetings.
4. Reports of injuries to subjects.
Students are encouraged to keep copies of consent forms in their personal records.

New York Theological Seminary
Institutional Review Board Application--Research Protocol

1. List your name, contact information, and the name of the institution, course, or project To which your research is related. List the names and contact information for your faculty advisors to this project (or note for faculty-designed classroom assignments or faculty research, n/a).

2. Explain the nature and purpose of this research. What do you hope to learn and why?

3. Describe your research methods and procedures.
Be specific. Indicate the length of time involved and the place where you plan to conduct interviews or observation. Explain how you will select or recruit participants, and you plan to make and keep records for your research. Specify your intentions for the use of visual records, such as photographs and videotapes.

4. Attach a copy of all survey instruments or a list of the questions that you intend to ask potential participants. If these questions are not completely settled, submit your tentative plans.

5. Describe your relationship to the potential participants. Are you their pastor, chaplain, teacher, friend or other?

6. Discuss any potential benefits you envision for the participants in your study.
What is the good that you hope will result from this study? What benefits, if any, will accrue to the participants?

7. Discuss any potential risks to the participants in your study.
Are any of your participants members of vulnerable groups (such as children, persons with stigmatizing illnesses, whistleblowers, prisoners, persons with physically or mentally disabling conditions, etc.)? Explain the measures you will take to provide for their privacy. Explain how you will respond if a participant has adverse effects as a result of your study.

8. Explain the policies and procedures that you will use to insure the confidentiality and or
anonymity of your participants.
Will you use pseudonyms or a numerical coding system? Are there any factors other than names that might identify your research subjects? If so, what will you do to insure anonymity? How will your data be stored? How long will the data be kept?

9. Include a copy of any consent forms that you are planning to use.
The language used on these forms should be clear, simple, and straightforward, not laden with technical jargon.

10. What will happen to the final report of your research? Do you plan to share the summary
with the class, community or congregation? What form will this representation take, and what media will you use? List any possible venues in which you might publish this work now or in the future.

New York Theological Seminary Informed Consent Form

Introduction: My name is _____, and I am faculty/staff/student (circle one) at New York Theological Seminary conducting research for _____

My phone number is _____. My email is: _____

My research supervisor is _____

His/her phone number is _____. His/her email is:_____

Feel free to contact either of us at any time if you have questions about this study.

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to study _____

at (name of congregation or institution)_____.

I am trying to learn more about _____

Procedure: If you consent to participating in this study, you will be asked to participate in the following ways _____ and make the following commitments (list all requirements and commitments-- e.g., be interviewed, participate in some kind of didactic or group study, retreats, and be interviewed before, during, and after the study, etc.)_____.

I may/will (circle one) also make (an audiotape, videotape, written) _____ recording of the sessions. After the project is completed, I will destroy all audio and video tapes.

Time required: The project will begin on _____ (give date) and conclude on_____. You are being asked to commit to (number of sessions/hours) _____ of your time.

Voluntary participation: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate, you may still decline to participate in any of the sessions or answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. You are completely free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Risks: I anticipate the following risks (list any anticipated risks) _____; or there are no known risks associated with this study. In any human subject research involving self-disclosure, there is always the possibility that you may feel discomfort or distress in the course of the research. If this happens, please inform me immediately.

Benefits: While there are no guaranteed benefits, it is possible that you may enjoy participating in this research and/or sharing your responses to research questions, or that you will find the project personally or spiritually meaningful. This study is intended to benefit the congregation (or institution) by _____.

Confidentiality/Anonymity: Your name will be kept confidential in all of the reporting and/or writing related to this study. I will be the only person present during the project's research. I will be the only person who sees/listens to any of the tape recordings. When I write the final paper, I will use pseudonyms—made-up names–for all participants, unless you specify in writing that you wish to be identified by name.

If you wish to choose your own pseudonym for the study, please indicate the first name you would like me to use for you here: _____

Importance of Candor: It is essential to this kind of research that all responses from participants be open, candid, forthright, and honest.

Sharing the results: Results of research may be shared through class presentation, in written form, or in other ways. I anticipate that the results of this research will be shared in the following ways: _____.

Publication: There is the possibility that I may publish this study or refer to it in published writing in the future. In this event, I will continue to use pseudonyms (as described above) and I may alter some identifying details in order to further protect your anonymity.

Before you sign: By signing below, you are agreeing to participate in this project with the possibility of being audio-taped, videotaped, and your words being written in a final paper. Be sure that any questions you may have are answered to your full satisfaction before signing this document. If you agree to participate in this study, a copy of this document will be given to you. Separate copies will be kept in a sealed envelope in a locked file cabinet in the New York Theological Seminary Dean's office and by the researcher.

Participant's signature: _____ Date:_____

Print Name: _____

Parent or guardian's signature (required for participants under the age of 18):

_____ Date:_____

Print Name: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

New York Theological Seminary Informed Consent Form for Elective Doctoral Projects

Introduction:

My name is _____, and I am a Doctor of Ministry candidate at New York Theological Seminary conducting research for an elective Doctor of Ministry course project.

My phone number is _____. My email is: _____

My research supervisor is _____ His/her phone number is _____.

His/her email is:_____

Feel free to contact either of us at any time if you have questions about this study.

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to study _____

at (name of congregation or institution).

I am trying to learn more about _____

Procedure: If you consent to participating in this study, you will be asked to participate in the following ways and make the following commitments (list all requirements and commitments-- e.g., be interviewed, participate in some kind of didactic or group study, retreats, and be interviewed before, during, and after the study, etc.).

I may/will (circle one) also make _____ (an audiotape, videotape, written) recording of the sessions. After the final paper is approved by my faculty readers, I will destroy all audio and video tapes.

Time required: The project will begin on _____(give date) and conclude on_____. You are being asked to commit to (number of sessions/hours) _____of your time.

Voluntary participation: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate, you may still decline to participate in any of the sessions or answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. You are completely free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Risks: I anticipate the following risks (list any anticipated risks) _____; or there are no known risks associated with this study. In any human subject research involving self-disclosure, there is always the possibility that you may feel discomfort or distress in the course of the research. If this happens, please inform me immediately.

Benefits: While there are no guaranteed benefits, it is possible that you may enjoy participating in this research and/or sharing your responses to research questions, or that you will find the project personally or spiritually meaningful. This study is intended to benefit the congregation (or institution) by

Confidentiality/Anonymity: Your name will be kept confidential in all of the reporting and/or writing related to this study. I (or some lay advisory team members) will be the only persons present during the project's research. I will be the only person who sees/listens to any the tape recordings. When I write the final paper, I will use pseudonyms--made up names--for all participants, unless you specify in writing that you wish to be identified by name.

If you wish to choose your own pseudonym for the study, please indicate the first name you would like me to use for you here: _____

Importance of Candor: It is essential to this kind of pastoral research that all responses from participants be open, candid, forthright, and honest. Sometimes participants desire that their pastors do well on the final phase of their doctoral degree and feel pressured only to offer responses which complement the pastor's work or artificially inflate their experience for fear that the pastor will get a bad grade or not finish the program. Since this project is the capstone of a professional doctorate degree, it is essential, for the sake of promoting critical learning, that participants not feel pressured to be anything less than completely open and honest in their responses.

Sharing the results: In order successfully to complete the elective Doctor of Ministry course, I am required by the seminary to offer a written account of what I learn from this research together with my reading and personal reflections. This paper will be submitted to my course instructor at the end of the project for formal academic review, assessment, and evaluation.

I also plan (or do not plan) to share what I learn from this study with the congregation (or other institution). Portions of this study may be printed and made available to the members.

Publication: There is the possibility that I may publish this study or refer to it in published writing in the future. In this event, I will continue to use pseudonyms (as described above) and I may alter some identifying details in order to further protect your anonymity.

Before you sign: By signing below, you are agreeing to participate in this ministry project with the possibility of being audio-taped, videotaped, and your words being written in a final paper. Be sure that any questions you may have are answered to your full satisfaction before signing this document. If you agree to participate in this study, a copy of this document will be given to you. Separate copies will be kept in a sealed envelope in a locked file cabinet in the New York Theological Seminary DMin office and by the student researcher.

Participant's signature: _____ **Date:**_____

Print Name: _____

Parent or guardian's signature (required for participants under the age of 18):

_____**Date:**_____

Print Name: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Print Name: _____

New York Theological Seminary Informed Consent Form for Final Doctoral Projects
Introduction:

My name is _____, and I am a Doctor of Ministry

candidate at New York Theological Seminary conducting research for my final Doctor of Ministry project.

My phone number is _____. My email is: _____

My research supervisor is _____

His/her phone number is _____. His/her email is: _____

Feel free to contact either of us at any time if you have questions about this study.

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to study _____

at (name of congregation or institution) _____.

I am trying to learn more about _____.

Procedure: If you consent to participating in this study, you will be asked to participate in the

following ways_____ and make the following commitments (list all requirements and

commitments--e.g., be interviewed, participate in some kind of didactic or group study, retreats, and be

interviewed before, during, and after the study, etc.) _____.

I may also make (an audiotape, videotape, written) _____recording of the sessions.

After the final paper is approved by my faculty readers, I will destroy all audio and video tapes.

Time required: The project will begin on _____ (give date) and conclude on_____. You are

being asked to commit to (number of sessions/hours) _____of your time.

Voluntary participation: Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you

choose to participate, you may still decline to participate in any of the sessions or answer any

questions that you do not wish to answer. You are completely free to withdraw from the study at

any time.

Risks: I anticipate the following risks (list any anticipated risks)_____, or There are no known

risks associated with this study. In any human subject research involving self-disclosure, there is always the

possibility that you may feel discomfort or distress in the course of the research. If

this happens, please inform me immediately.

Benefits: While there are no guaranteed benefits, it is possible that you may enjoy participating

in this research and/or sharing your responses to research questions, or that you will find the

project personally or spiritually meaningful. This study is intended to benefit the congregation

(or institution) by _____.

Confidentiality/Anonymity: Your name will be kept confidential in all of the reporting and/or writing related to this study. I (or some lay advisory team members) will be the only persons present during the project's research. I will be the only person who sees/listens to any the tape recordings. When I write the final paper, I will use pseudonyms--made up names–for all participants, unless you specify in writing that you wish to be identified by name.

If you wish to choose your own pseudonym for the study, please indicate the first name you would like me to use for you here: _____

Importance of Candor: It is essential to this kind of pastoral research that all responses from participants be open, candid, forthright, and honest. Sometimes participants desire that their pastors do well on the final phase of their doctoral degree and feel pressured only to offer responses which complement the pastor's work or artificially inflate their experience for fear that the pastor will get a bad grade or not finish the program. Since this project is the capstone of a professional doctorate degree, it is essential, for the sake of promoting critical learning, that participants not feel pressured to be anything less than completely open and honest in their responses.

Sharing the results: In order to complete my Doctor of Ministry degree, I am required by the Seminary to offer a written account of what I learned from this research together with my reading and personal reflections. This paper will be submitted to my doctoral committee, consisting of two faculty readers, at the end of the project for formal academic review, assessment, and evaluation. If its review by the faculty is successful, a digital copy will be made and maintained permanently in New York Theological Seminary's library where it will be available for public reading. I also plan to share what I learn from this study with the congregation (or other institution). Portions of this study may be printed and made available to the members.

Publication: There is the possibility that I will publish this study or refer to it in published writing in the future. In this event, I will continue to use pseudonyms (as described above) and I may alter some identifying details in order to further protect your anonymity.

Before you sign: By signing below, you are agreeing to participate in this ministry project with the possibility of being audio-taped, videotaped, and your words being written in a final paper. Be sure that any questions you may have are answered to your full satisfaction before signing this document. If you agree to participate in this study, a copy of this document will be given to you. Separate copies will be kept in a sealed envelope in a locked file cabinet in the New York Theological Seminary DMin Office and by the student researcher.

Participant's signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Print Name: _____

Parent or guardian's signature (required for participants under the age of 18):

_____ **Date:** _____

Print Name: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Print Name: _____

APPENDIX C
MENS' MINISTRY SEASON SCHEDULE

Fail-ure: 1. The state or fact of being lacking or insufficient. 2. A losing of power or strength; weakening, dying away. 3. Not doing; neglect or omission. 4. Not succeeding in doing or becoming. 5. A person who does not succeed.

- Set three (3) goals that you would like to achieve or obtain and how you believe this study/discussion group can aid in achieving your goals.

Goal#1

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Goal #2

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Goal #3

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Prepared by: Rev. Colin L. Campbell

COURAGE TO CONFRONT FAILURE

CONFRONTING INCOMPETENCIES (FAILURE) AND COMPETENCIES (SUCCESS)

Food For Thought: How do you think others define failure? What do you think are the stigmas that are attached to being a failure?

"Failure is good. It's fertilizer. Everything I've learned about coaching, I've learned from making mistakes" -- Rick Patino

- **List one (1) incompetency you would like to change**

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"Problems are to the mind what exercise is to the muscles, they toughen and make strong"

-- Norman Vincent Peale

- **What competency are you most concerned about? What would be "good enough" to achieve competence (success)**

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"Success isn't built on success. It is built on failure and frustration, sometimes catastrophe, and learning to turn it around" – Sumner Redstone

• **Identify three (3) things you would like to be able to do by the end of the year and then write alongside them what you need to do in order to be able to do them by the end of the year**

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• **Seven (7) Obstacles in the Threshing Zone that Hinders Competence (Success)**

1.   Perceived disparity between others assessment of our ability to achieve competence and our own assessment of our ability to achieve competence.

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2.   The anxiety in anticipation of working in the Threshing Zone to achieve competence.

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3.   The anticipation of the exhaustion after going through the full process of achieving competence.

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4.   Having the feeling of relief instead of satisfaction when the process is completed.

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5.   The feeling of inability to carry past achievements into the next process.

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6.   The fear of being found out, of shame, and of humiliation in the process.

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7.   The fear or lack of willingness to reach out for help, which leads to undue strain, discomfort, and feeling of isolation.

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"In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity" -- Albert Einstein

• **List one (1) thing that you believe that you are Incompetent about, which others may say you are competent. Why?**

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Confronting Failure in the Workplace

"You don't drown by falling in the water; You drown by staying there" – Edwin Louis Cole

•   In an area of your competency, if you were "knocked down" unexpectedly do you have a plan of recovery? Why or How? Identify someone you can reach out to.

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CONFRONTING FAILURE IN FATHERHOOD

"Men succeed when they realize that their failures are the preparations for their victories"

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

- **What would be one piece of advice you never received as a youth which you would have liked to have had, or found useful? Give yourself that advice now, and if possible follow it in a way that is relevant to you now.**

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CONFRONTING FAILURE IN RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUALITY

"The ultimate measure of a person is not where he or she stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he or she stands at times of challenge and controversy"

– Martin Luther King, Jr.

- **Write seven (7) things in priority order that you expect to receive in a relationship with a partner, then write down seven (7) things in priority order that you believe a partner would like to receive from you. If you are in a relationship and do not know, find out and note the similarities and differences.**

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"What does not destroy me makes me stronger" – Friedrich Nietzsche

- **What stage are you in with each of the three (3) goals that you wrote at the beginning of this study/group discussion? Did your ideas in each goal change as the study/group discussion progressed? How? Write down the main points of your own progress from working in the Threshing Zone on moving from failure to success.**

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WORKSHOP SURVEY

FAILURE (SESSION #1)

- **What was the most helpful part of this workshop?**

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- **What was the least helpful part of this workshop?**

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- **What could have been done to make this workshop better?**

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APPENDIX D
BIBLE ENGAGEMENT WORKING DEFINITION

American Bible Society's
Bible Engagement: Working Definition

Phil Towner, PhD, Joseph V. Crockett, Ed.D.

Background

Complementing the translation mission, Scripture engagement is the current calling card of the Bible Society movement. First used at the Midrand General Assembly in 2000, it was defined as *"helping people interact with the Word of God"* and was intended to move the Bible society movement beyond the distribution and translation of the Scriptures into finding new forms of transformational engagement between peoples, societies and cultures and the biblical narrative. The phrase *"scripture engagement"* could be taken as a summary of all the various forms of work – research, services and product development – that were either sponsored or developed as early as 1996 by the BFBS. Through their work a range of innovative initiatives began to help people interact with the Scriptures through the mediating framework of four social change drivers: politics, education, arts and media. In summary, this work was directed toward the public advocacy of the Scriptures in the public and civic life of liberal democracy.

All Bible engagement initiatives of Bible societies world-wide should provide aspects of what may be involved in developing a comprehensive framework for exploring the relationship between the Bible and contemporary cultural contexts.

Definition

Bible engagement (like any form of active learning) is incarnational, holistic and inherently linked to the lifestyles of people, groups, communities and cultures. The aim of Bible engagement is for all people to experience the life-changing message of the Bible. Bible engagement addresses the whole person – this includes the cognitive, emotional, spiritual, physical, social and cultural dimensions of life and corresponding behaviours. Bible engagement defines the contours of the biblical redemptive story and identifies culturally appropriate contemporary entry points through which this life-changing story may be entered and inhabited today, its truth embodied, and its goals for human life achieved.

7 Essential Features of Bible Engagement

1. Relational: Bible engagement is a means for discovering, understanding, nurturing and sustaining God's intended ways of being in the world.

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2. <u>Practical:</u> Bible engagement helps persons learn how to read, inhabit and embody scripture in different cultural settings and contexts, while also attending to the ways the Bible has been interpreted in different historical and cultural contexts.

3. <u>Participatory:</u> Bible engagement recognizes and provides for the active involvement of individuals and communities in interpretation and meaning-making processes.

4. <u>Culturally situated:</u> Bible engagement helps audiences explore the world behind the Bible, the world within the Bible, and the world to which the Bible is addressed.

5. <u>Inter-confessional:</u> Bible engagement will address current biblical interpretation at work across the whole church.

6. <u>Global:</u> Bible engagement appreciates recent developments in globalisation and embraces the pluralism of global biblical interpretation and translation studies.

7. <u>Interdisciplinary:</u> Bible engagement focuses on our present contexts, and equally on the way audiences in our present contexts access the Scriptures. Bible engagement listens to and learns from many disciplines of study.

Questions Connecting Social Science Research and Bible Engagement include:

- What are the interests of biblical interpreters and users as they engage the Bible?

- How do texts and readers interact?

- What has been the heritage and historical effects of particular texts on the community involved?

- In what kind of situation was the biblical text formed and under what conditions is the text read and used today?

- How are biblical interpretations facilitating, constraining, legitimizing and maintaining current social arrangements?

- Who benefits from the ways in which Bible engagement functions? How do they benefit? Who bears the costs, and at what price?

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APPENDIX E
BLACK MEN IN PRISON: THE BIBLE AND THE CHURCH

"An Historic Mission for a New Day of Ministry"
Summary and Recommendations Regarding
The President's Seminar
Black Men in Prison: The Bible and the Church
Prepared by
Dr. Joseph V. Crockett, Director of Research

Summary of Facts[1] and Insights

The American Bible Society (ABS) sponsored a presidential seminar Thursday, February 9, 2006. The President's Seminar is a forum to explore ideas and advance solutions that will strengthen the Society and increase its philanthropic resources. The seminar topic, "Black Men in Prison: The Bible and the Church," brought together key ABS staff, subject-matter experts, and thought leaders to examine the state of Black men in prison and to define opportunities and issues in ways that may lead to effective collaborative action.

The American Bible Society is a custodian – a steward – of Christian Scriptures. Scripture integrated into the life and faith of incarcerated persons can make a fundamental contribution to their transformation. Yet, while the integration of Scripture into the life, beliefs, and actions of imprisoned persons is essential, by itself it is insufficient. The family, the church, the community – the village – must help those who have been imprisoned to meet the challenges and overcome the obstacles on their journey toward rehabilitation, re-entry, and restoration in society. The President's Seminar was a forum for testing the legitimacy of this assertion. During the Seminar the claim was validated.

Seven experts and thought leaders presented information about the current status of Black men in prison from a variety of perspectives. Four factors were identified to help in understanding the concerns of Black men in prison. These factors were race, gender, Scripture engagement, and the church. Presenters helped participants to understand *what* needs to be done, *why* the issue of Black men in prison is both an important and urgent need, and *how* the ABS may be part of the solution. For expediency, this summary highlights facts, insights, and comments from some, but not all, of the presentations.

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Facts

Dr. Gerard Bryant, Northeast Regional Psychology Services Administrator of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, presented current statistics about Black men in prison in the U.S. He also shared information about some current directions and programs the Federal Bureau of Prisons is undertaking. The statistics below reflect the federal prison system, and does not take into account state and local correctional data.

Dr. Bryant presented comparative data on the U.S. population, the percentage of African Americans in the criminal justice system and prevalence rates of imprisonment across three racial-ethnic groups – Black, Hispanics, and Whites.

- Population
  - U.S. population: 293,000,000 (2003 Census)
  - U.S. African American population: 38, 090,000 or 13%
  - Percentage of African Americans in the criminal justice system: 43%

- Prevalence Rates
  - If recent incarceration rates remain steady, an estimated 1 in every 15 persons (6.6%) of the U.S. population will serve time in a prison during their lifetime.
  - The prevalence of imprisonment in 2001 was higher for:
    - Black males (16.6%) and Hispanic males (7.7%) than for white males (2.6%)
    - Black females (1.7%) and Hispanic females (0.7) than for white females (0.3%)
  - Lifetime chances of a person going to prison are higher for:
    - Men (1.1%) than for women (1.8%)
    - Blacks (18.6%) and Hispanics (10%) than for whites (3.4%)
  - Based on current rates of first time incarceration, an estimated 32% of Black males will enter State or Federal Prison during their lifetime, compared to 17% of Hispanic males and 5.9% of white males.

- Re-entry and Recidivism
  - It is estimated that 650,000 incarcerated persons will re-enter society, annually.

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- Re-arrest rates are staggering for Blacks and Whites. Almost seventy-three percent of Blacks (72.9%) and 62.7% of Whites are re-arrested after an initial imprisonment.
- Re-conviction rates are lower, but no less alarming. More than half (51.1%) of Blacks and 43.3% of Whites are re-convicted after an initial imprisonment.

Insights

The American Bible Society is a custodian – a steward – of Christian Scriptures. Providing Christian Scriptures to people in prison is a charitable act and a means of practicing its stewardship. The integration of Scripture in the life and faith of inmates is not sufficient by itself to sustain their rehabilitation, re-entry, and restoration in society, but it is a critical component of the process.

Dr. Stephen B. Reid, Academic Dean and Professor of Old Testament Studies at Bethany Theological Seminary, led participants to experience and to understand the promise, power, and relevance engaging Scripture can yield to the topic of Black men in prison. From a biblical understanding of the value of family for the economic and social welfare of family, and the father's role in the family, Dr. Reid demonstrated how the imprisonment of Black men tears the economic and social fabric of families and their communities.

Three observations by Dr. Reid bring attention to the central role of family in biblical times and suggest opportunities for helping Black men in prison in their rehabilitation, re-entry, and restoration in society.

- "The family inculcated the customs and lore of the people (Proverb 1:8; 6:20) and provided the founding narratives recounting God's salvation history (Exodus 10:2; 12:26; 13:8; Deuteronomy 4:9; 6:7, 20-25; 32:7, 46)"
- "For biblical times the family business was the family. The *bayit* (house) was a self-sustaining economic unit well into the monarchical period (1020-586 BCE)."
- "The combination of the economic function of the family and the socialization role as auto catalyst shaped the social institutions and understandings of authority."

Reverend Dr. Carolyn McCrary, Associate Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling at the Interdenominational Theological Center, stated the value of Bible engagement for congregations, while Dr. Edwin Muller, Chair of The Commission on Chaplains of The New York State Council of Churches,

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emphasized the importance of Bible engagement for inmates and their ability to make sense of the biblical message for their situation.

Several panelists commented about the need for Black men in prison to hold a strong self-identity and the damages caused and incurred from negative self-images and self-efficacy. Presenters repeatedly made connections between inmates' self-identity, their self-efficacy, and their selection of and participation in group life. Presenters described how inmates' self-efficacy and need for protection influences their choice of gangs, and even their decision to choose Islam and abandon Christianity. Faith-based organizations, like prison ministry fellowship, are the predominant "outside" volunteer group at work with incarcerated persons currently. However, it was observed that once inmates are released from prison, there is a gap in the support available to them. No religious organization or ministry agency is in place presently to work with released prisoners, their families, churches, or communities to which they return.

From these facts and insights, several observations make up a platform for moving forward.

1. Ministry to and with Black men in prison must be directed to families, congregations, and communities as well as to inmates and persons re-entering society.
2. Scripture engagement has an integral role to play in the rehabilitation, re-entry, and restoration of inmates into society.
3. Self-identity, self-efficacy, and the heritage and efficacy of families, churches, and communities are other important elements to enlist for the success and sustainability of Black men's transformation and re-entry into society.

Recommendations

Objective

We seek Bible engagement that leads inmates, their families, denominations, and communities to experience God, integrate faith and life, hold life-affirming values and nurture faith in community.

Outcomes

Achievement of this objective can produce measurable results as results can be assessed by several indicators:

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- Reduced recidivism;
- Increased denominational programming for the re-entry and restoration of inmates into society;
- Raised awareness of issues surrounding Black men in prison;
- Enhanced reputation of ABS as a leader in the area of inmate re-entry initiatives; and,
- Enlarged number of donors attracted to ABS' philanthropic efforts and increased fund development.

Next Steps

- Build Networks and Maintain Relationships

Use existing contacts, networks, and relationships to develop and maintain a critical cadre of denominations in the involvement of ministry with Black men in prison. For example, we may choose to reproduce some form of The President's Seminar for denominational and community leaders. Such activity would provide a venue for increasing awareness and a chance for refining the issues while nurturing relationships among friends and allies. Strengthening existing ties provides a basis for reaching others who hold common values and interest. Strong ties increase our capacity to influence other individuals and organizations *we do not know* through people *we know*. We can meet the re-entry and rehabilitative needs of inmates better together than alone.

The eight (8) historic African American denominations would be our primary target for building networks and maintaining relationships pertaining to this ministry initiative. They are:

1. African Methodist Episcopal Church
2. African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
3. Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
4. Church of God in Christ
5. National Baptist Convention of America
6. National Baptist Convention, USA
7. National Missionary Baptist Church of America
8. Progressive National Baptist Convention

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- Conduct Repeatable Public Awareness Campaigns

Use multiple forms of media to communicate the need, the partners, and the role of the ABS in ministry with and to inmates for their restoration and re-entry in society. Channels for a public awareness campaign may include mass media, micro-media, targeted direct marketing, database marketing, customer relations activities, personal media, and all distribution channels of partners and allies.

- Collaborate in the Development and Execution of Events

Initiate, develop, and support the creation and execution of events that advocate the value of Scripture engagement in the rehabilitation, re-entry, and restoration of inmates to society. Include subject-matter experts in the criminal justice system and thought leaders in events that are created to become *points of interest;* that is, settings and occasions that foster receptivity and strengthen resolve to help Black men in prison. Points of interests also become the places and times for ABS to engage a critical mass to take action to achieve our shared and desired outcomes while simultaneously creating space to advocate for ABS.

- Mobilizing Resources

We must identify and recruit a critical mass of denominational and community leaders to, in turn, gather together enough people and resources to deliver specific, immediate, and short-term goals. This will involve:

- Encouraging collaboration partners to speak and act in support of former inmates' rehabilitation, re-entry, and restoration to society;

- Engaging people who have access to key networks;

- Directly "charging" denominations to mobilize large numbers of people in efforts to help Black men in their move from incarceration to rehabilitation, re-entry, and restoration;

- Staying open and attuned to different and emerging ideas so that ABS may always be ready to adapt and adjust to shifting circumstances; and,

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- Continuously seeking ways and means to deliver immediate and short-term value in exchange for participants' (denominations, individuals, etc.) use of their time, talents, and dollars. The benefit may be information, recognition, an opportunity to do good or other things that reward people for their efforts and demonstrate appreciation and respect.

Conclusion

Addressing concerns related to Black men in prison and their re-entry and restoration to society will be challenging and rewarding work. Working with denominations and community leaders that have the vision, prospects, and resources to foster and sustain a transformed life will help ABS target a specific set of audiences with pertinent needs and interests. Communicating with people about the needs and interests we have to reclaim the broken lives of inmates, who are informed, transformed, and sustained by God's Word, will increase ABS' organizational efficiency, decrease the likelihood of ABS participating in a cluttered marketplace, and enhance ABS' capacity to support a sustainable future.

Creating and executing a ministry program focused on the concern of Black men in prison has relevance. This initiative will allow the American Bible Society to participate in a cause that matters. Working collaboratively with denominations and community leaders will help empower African American communities to gain command over many of the factors that contribute to the Black men's incarceration.

Our mission is historic, but our ministry – advocating Scripture engagement – can be suited for a new day.

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[1] The Facts are based on Bureau of Justice Statistics, presented by Dr. Gerard Bryant, February 9, 2006 at The President's Seminar, Black Men in Prison: The Bible and the Church, New York, NY.

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1. African Methodist Episcopal Church
   - Bishop Gregory G.M. Ingram, President, Council of Bishops
2. African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church
   - Bishop George W. C. Walker, Senior Bishop
3. Christian Methodist Episcopal Church
   - Bishop Marshall Gilmore, Senior Bishop
4. Church of God in Christ
   - (contact to be determined)
5. National Baptist Convention of America
   - Reverend Stephen John Thurston, President
6. National Baptist Convention, USA
   - Dr. William J. Shaw, President
7. National Missionary Baptist Church of America
   - Dr. Melvin V. Wade
8. Progressive National Baptist Convention
   - Reverend Dr. Major Lewis Jemison, President

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